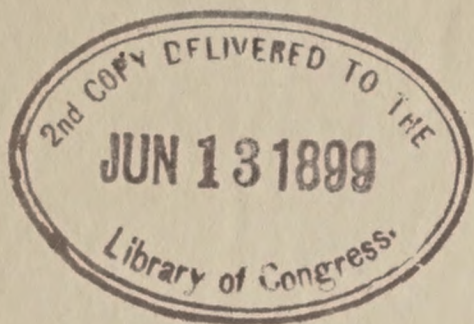


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MEMORY TALKS

on Spiritual Power

OR

The Holy Spirit
and the Church

✓ BY

R. A. HUTCHISON



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Publishers of Evangelical Literature

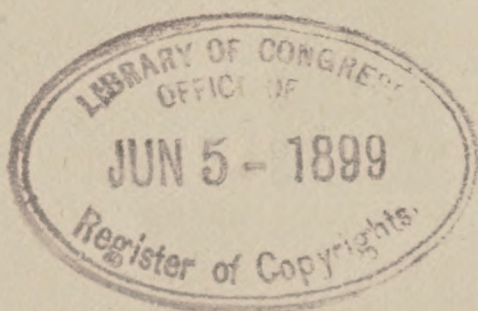
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PREFACE.

The object in sending forth this volume is to do good. The author has been benefited by writing it, and his earnest prayer is that those who read may share in the profit. The theme is "Spiritual Power." The book has been arranged in a series of *Talks* on the theme. The matter of these talks, both in the general plan and the individual chapters, is expressed with a view to aid the mind in retaining. Hence the title—"Memory Talks on Spiritual Power."

No apology need be given for the use of the acrostic and alliterative method of outline. It will be understood that the object is to classify the teaching on the subject, to aid the memory. The method is used with reverence; with regard to the dignity of the theme. Where truth has been omitted or irrelevant matter introduced, it has not been to accommodate the outline. Yet it can hardly be expected that a method of this kind will in every case conform to the rules of logic or homiletics. Beneath the memory arrangement is an outline answering to the questions, "Who, What, How, Why and Whither."

Let it be noted that the second general head,

Preface

“Power and Precept,” is not designed to continue the Holy-Spirit thought so much as to set forth the basic elements and the important related doctrines.

In these remarks the author wishes to acknowledge gratefully the help received from other sources. Especially does he wish to mention Evangelist H. H. Bell, of San Francisco, Cal., who rendered valuable assistance in kindly and carefully reviewing the manuscript for publication.

In committing this volume to the public there is no little hesitancy because of its many imperfections; but there is the earnest desire that it may be used by Him whom it is designed to honor, in leading some to the true source of power.

R. A. HUTCHISON.

Altoona. Pa., Feb. 1, 1899.

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MEMORY TALKS ON SPIRITUAL POWER

OR

THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE CHURCH.

WORD OUTLINE.

PART I.

POWER AND PROMISE.

Ye shall receive power.—*Acts 1:8.*

Persons—Who?	“Ye”	{ Preachers. Officers. Workers. Educators. Reformers.
Origin?	1. As to origin of the Power.	{ Physical. Organization. Wealth. Education. Reputation.
What?	Not	
Workings?	2. As to workings.	{ Planning. Operating. Watching. Enlightening. Rewarding.
Enunciation?	1. Godward side by Promise.	{ Kind. { Pertinent. Official. Wise. Extraordinary. Reliable.
How?		
Reception?	2. Manward side on what Con- ditions.	{ Prayer. Obedience. Waiting. Expecting. Receiving.

Outline

PART II.

POWER AND PRECEPT.

OR

FUNDAMENTAL CONDITIONS TO SPIRITUAL POWER.

Repent ye, and believe the gospel. Mark 1:15.	1. Faith. Jno. 7:38.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Nature of. 2. Necessity of. 3. Note of.
Why?	2. Repentance. Acts 2:28, 3:19.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Nature of. 2. Necessity of. 3. Note of.
Be clothed with humility; humble yourselves. 1 Pet. 5:5-6.	3. Humility.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Nature of. 2. Necessity of. 3. Nutriment of.

PART III.

POWER AND PROPHECY

OR

POWER AND ITS PREDICTED PRODUCT.

“I will be as the dew unto Israel; he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon.”—*Hos. 14:5*.

Prophecy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Primary application—Israel. 2. Prophetic significance—Church of Christ, and Holy Spirit.
Operations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. As to manner—Silently, gradually. 2. As to means. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Word of God. 2. Providence. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Affliction. Persecution.
Work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Beauty—“Grow as the lily.” 2. Strength—“Cast forth roots as Lebanon.”
Exhibition.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inward purity and peace. 2. Outward consistency and activity.
Roots.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Faith. 2. Love. 3. Hope.

INTRODUCTION

I have read carefully the manuscript of these Memory Talks on the Holy Spirit, and gladly avail myself of the privilege of writing an introduction to their publication.

This is the dispensation of the Holy Ghost, and He is nearer to us than the very atmosphere we breathe. We need only to fulfil the conditions to have Him fill us to overflowing; and a Spirit-filled life is a life of power.

He waits to reveal Christ to us, and Christ is the power of God. He stands ready to make plain our inheritance to us, and we may claim it all and use it all by a simple act of faith and appropriation. May this book be a blessing to very many.

J. WILBUR CHAPMAN, D. D.

Pastor of Bethany Presbyterian Church.

Philadelphia.

PART I.

Power and Promise.

Ye shall receive power. Acts 1:8.

MEMORY TALKS ON SPIRITUAL POWER.

I.~

PERSONS TO WHOM POWER IS PROMISED.

"Ye shall receive power."—ACTS i.8.

Recently the inhabitants of a northern city were moved with joy over the great achievement of electrical science which brought the machinery of their city into touch with the almost unlimited power of famous Niagara Falls. But this promise brings us a power which exceeds that of the wonderful cataract. A greater than Niagara is here. With unspeakable joy we hear Him say, "Ye shall receive power." This is a vital part of that blessed heritage our Lord bestows on His followers. To this fact nineteen centuries bear testimony, "our enemies themselves being judges." Those who "turn the world upside down" have troubled not only the ancients, but later, for the same reason, Rome trembled before Luther, and Queen Mary dreaded the army of the nation less than the fearless Knox.

The uppermost thought of the early disciples was temporal kingdom. "Wilt Thou at this

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time restore again the kingdom," earthly rule, material power, "to Israel?" Their Lord has something better in store. "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons," but, "Ye shall receive power." Not your nation as such, but Ye. Ye who have followed Me, the despised Nazarite. Ye who have been despised for My sake. Ye who have forsaken your old associations, and worldly interests, and have undertaken the great, the arduous work of extending My kingdom.

Do we ask, "Who shall receive power?" There is but one answer. "Ye," My followers. To be more specific in this answer to find the length and breadth, the height and depth of this little pronoun we may classify the followers of Christ into five groups, using the successive letters of our key-word *power* to introduce them. Who shall receive power? "Ye,"

PREACHERS OF THE GOSPEL.

"Go ye into all the world and *preach the gospel* to every creature." "Ye shall receive power." The precept, "Go ye," and the promise, "Ye shall receive," come from the same source and are directed to the same persons. Preachers, pastors, and evangelists have great need of power, and need of great power. Their work is great in importance; great in variety.

Power and Promise

Peter, himself a preacher as well as an eye-witness of the sufferings of Christ, in writing to the Christians of Asia mentions three important duties of the preacher. 1. Pet. 5:1-8. 1. His duty is to "feed the flock of God." 2. His duty is to rule,—“oversight” of—the flock. 3. His duty is to be an “ensample” to the flock. He is preacher, ruler, pattern. The first is his distinctive work. The second he shares with all church rulers. The third duty is common to all the followers of the meek and lowly Jesus.

These are great in importance, too, because of the variety of duties involved in each. To “feed the flock of God” is to preach the gospel not only to the people of God, but to “every creature.” It is to “Preach the Word.” Or as the apostle specifies, (Col. 1:28) as to matter, “whom (Christ) we preach”; as to the manner, “warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom”; as to the motive, “that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.” To have the “oversight” in the true sense is to “rule well,” to be a “faithful and wise steward”—prudent, prompt, persevering. Our Lord Himself (Matt. 5:16) states what is involved in being an “ensample.” “Ye are the light of the world.” “Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”

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This teaches (1) the manner of the exemplary life, "so shine that men may see"; (2) matter, "good works;" (3) motive, "glorify your Father which is in heaven;" still further, "Let it shine." Do not hinder it, nor endeavor to make it shine, but be Christlike and shine.

How great then in importance and variety are the duties involved in the life and work of a preacher! How much he needs the power to which this promise entitles him. In connection with those who labor in "word and doctrine" are others charged with the official management of the church. These are designated as

OFFICERS.

"Ye shall receive power." To preach the gospel to every creature? Yes, and more, even to "rule well." The Ephesian elders are informed by the apostle that the Holy Ghost has made them "overseers" of the flock. And as we shall point out further on, this promised power can come only by the Holy Ghost.

By Him they are made overseers. By Him only they have power to "rule well." Not as lords over God's heritage, but as ensamples to the flock. Still earlier in the history of the church, officers are mentioned having for their special duty the distribution of charities. Acts 6:1-6. "It is not reason, say the apostles,

Power and Promise

“that we should leave the Word of God and serve tables.” Hence the seven are chosen. The special qualifications of these officers is that they possess the power promised in our text. They must be men “full of the Holy Ghost.”

Apart from the direct testimony of the Scripture the very structure of the church teaches the necessity of officers. The Christian church is not a discordant, incoherent crowd; but a well-organized, harmonious body. “The body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body.” (1 Cor. 12: 12.) The church of Christ is one in faith and baptism and spirit, and must be one in rule and regulation, that all things may be done “decently and in order.”

There may be difference in the name and physical form of the government but all the members are of one body and blend into complete harmony in the general government by the Head of the body. The church of Christ is entitled to this promise whatever the form of government. Long ago it was said, “I will pour My spirit upon thy seed, and My blessing upon thine off-spring; one shall say I am the Lord’s and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob, and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord and surname himself by the name of Israel.”

Memory Talks on Spiritual Power

Thus a variety of names and forms, but all are recipients of the promised "spirit" and "blessing." Neither is this promise limited to denominations, nor to the special work of preaching the Word. When our Lord says, "Ye shall receive power" He includes not only preachers, but all who shall be set apart to "wait on tables," to take the "oversight," to "rule well," and to be "ensamples" to the flock. "Ye" preachers? Yes. "Ye" officers? Yes.

Is it a light thing to accept office in the church of Christ without first seeking and possessing the promised power? Is it a small matter for a congregation to adopt its own standard of *selection*, and with "partiality" prefer one before another because of "influence" or "wealth," disregarding the promised power-fitness? Appropriate is the warning, "Lay hands suddenly on no man."

There are others included in the word "Ye." Others who have no official titles. Others whose names, even, are not recorded. Others whose deeds receive no extended record. But enough is implied to convince us that then as now there were

WORKERS

included in the "Ye."

The writer of the Acts tells us that these all

Power and Promise

continued with one accord in prayer and supplication with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus and with His brethren. Here are not only His brethren, but also women who then and ever since have been faithful workers, loyal to the cause of Christ. These are they who early in the history of the church made themselves conspicuous for their service. At the death of our Lord, despite the disappointment and danger they are both hopeful and helpful. Some are helping Nicodemus and Joseph in the burial, some are comforting the bereaved mother, some are buying spices, and all are willing to spend money and time to honor the Master.

The Christian woman is worthy the tribute paid her in that familiar verse,—

“Not she with traitorous kiss her Master stung;
Not she denied Him with unfaithful tongue;
She when apostles fled could dangers brave,
Last at His cross and earliest at His grave.”

Those weeping widows at the bedside of Dorcas, those “coats and garments” speak with a voice that shall sound through the ages. That relief sent from Antioch to the needy in Judea tells of many “workers.” The Christian home of Aquila and Priscilla entertaining Paul and instructing Apollos suggests another class of workers. Another illustration is found in the four “bringing one sick of the palsy” to our Lord. We do not read that these four were of-

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ficially designated for that kind of service. We are told that they had faith. Their conduct shows they had sympathy, that they were all of one mind and purpose. Despite great difficulties they persevered and succeeded.

Have we not in these instances illustrations of thousands of workers to-day, whose names are rarely seen in print and whose voices are seldom heard in public? But their lives are marked by faithful, loving service, by works of necessity and mercy. They are uniting faith and prayers and efforts to bring the world, stricken with the palsy of sin, to the same great Physician to whom the four of old brought the palsied one. Did not our Lord include all such when He said, "Ye shall receive power"? How erroneous is the notion that this promised power is solely limited to those officially designated as preachers and rulers. "Ye" includes every follower of Christ. It matters not what your work, great or small, nor your position, exalted or humble. Are you an officer or teacher in the Sabbath-school, a member of the choir, or a leader in the prayer-meeting, a mother in the home training your child for work in the service of the Master; or are you toiling in shop or store earning a livelihood for self and family to be spent for the glory of God? The promise is yours.

Power and Promise

Then while we have seen that all Christians are embraced in the word "Ye" yet, to meet the much mistaken notion that this promise pertains exclusively to church workers, we wish to make special mention of two other classes whose work is and should be no less Christian than that usually designated as church or evangelistic. One of these classes is our

EDUCATORS.

"*Teaching* them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Matt. 28:20. Religious teachers are educators of the highest order. Aquila and Priscilla were educators expounding the "way of God more perfectly" to Apollos. Acts 18:26. Every true teacher is a teacher of truth. Every department of learning has to do with the "way of God." Milton says, "The end of learning is to know God, and out of that knowledge to love Him and imitate Him." As all roads lead to Rome so all truth leads to God. A little learning may tend to infidelity, but depths of knowledge lead to the source of all wisdom.

Science and art and literature, however widely divorced from the kingdom and work of the Master by designing minds, when traced to their source are found to be of God. All language is traceable to God's first linguistic gift

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to the race. Many maintain that the first written language was that given to Moses on the mount. In law also what advance has been made over the Mosaic code? Is the oratory, or the literature, or the music of the present day in any way distinct from, or superior to, the Scriptural specimens? Are there any teachers of morality to-day who reach a higher or even so lofty a standard as the Ten Commandments, or the Mountain Sermon, or the Farewell Address?

And yet is it not true that education is set aside as a secular thing? Those specially designed as educators full oft are not expected to seek divine help in their work. Even in Christian institutions the tendency is to limit the test for instructors to "brains" and "aptness to teach." Why should not the great army of educators in this Christian nation be expected not only to be *moral*, but to be disciples of the Great Teacher who is truth; even more, to be *possessors* of this promised power? He who said, "Go teach," also said, "Ye shall receive power." What a marvelous change this world would experience were our public school, academic, collegiate, and university instructors Christian men and women possessing this power! The promise is "Ye shall receive power." "Ye,"—preachers of the gospel, "Ye"—officers of My

Power and Promise

church, "Ye"—workers in My vineyard of every kind, including educators. We add also

REFORMERS.

Concerning the disciples it was said, "Those that turn the world upside down have come hither also." Acts 17:6. To turn things upside down is the business of reformers. Whatever is *wrong* side up in the church, or home, or state must be turned *right* side up. In the strict sense this is the mission of the gospel. The gospel is at the foundation of all reforms. The conversion of an individual is the complete turning about of his life. Reforms are in a sense conversions in the aggregate. A reform on a certain line is the conversion of the public conscience on that particular question. Such upheavals in society are not effected by the eloquence, or wit, or irony, or sarcasm of unsanctified men; but by truth candidly and fearlessly proclaimed by men full of Holy Spirit power.

Many who recognize the necessity of this promised power in reaching and rescuing the unsaved do not realize the absolute need of it in the warfare against organized evil. In the effort to destroy the saloon and the gambling den, to contend with the social evil, and Sabbath desecration, we are prone to rely on physical force; to rely on numbers, money, and political help, not

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conscious of the fact that in this as in evangelistic work the "battle is the Lord's." In both, the enemy is the same. In the latter his fortifications are a hundredfold stronger. In "The Tongue of Fire," Mr. Arthur says, "Much as Satan glories in his power over an individual, how much greater must be his glorying over a nation embodying, in its laws and usages, disobedience to God, wrong to man, contamination to morals. To destroy all national holds of evil, to root sin out of institutions, to hold up to view the gospel idea of a righteous nation, to confront all unwholesome public usages with mild, genial, and ardent advocacy of what is purer, is one of the first duties of those whose position or mode of thought gives them influence on general questions."

All Christians should be reformers. By virtue of their position and "mode of thought" some are so in a special sense. Many are so known in history. Almost every age has its worthy list of mighty men and women designated by this term. Their special work has been to destroy all national holds of evil, to root sin out of institutions, to hold up to view the gospel idea of a righteous nation. Where they have succeeded it has been by utter dependence on this promised power. They have believed and realized that, "The battle is the Lord's";

Power and Promise

and that, It is nothing for Him to help, "whether with many or with them that have not power."

To sum up the answer to this question, "Who shall receive power?" we find that the promise is to all followers of Christ. To preachers of the Word, officers of the church, workers, educators, and reformers. All these are embraced in that one pronoun "Ye." How important! How wide the range! Preaching the gospel to every creature, ruling well the flock, working for the Master in visiting the sick, in leading sinners to the great Physician, in educating and reforming the masses. "Who is sufficient for these things? Not that we are sufficient of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God." 2 Cor. 3: 5. It is not in man to do these things. Paul was not alone in realizing this insufficiency. Even heathen have confessed the need of some power higher than human. Cicero said, "No man was ever great without a divine afflatus." To meet this weakness, this insufficiency, our Lord has made special provision for His followers. Not that they may be "great," but that they may be *great servants*, He assures them of the divine "afflatus" in the promise, "Ye shall receive power."

Therefore what joy should thrill the soul of every Christian at the announcement of this

Memory Talks on Spiritual Power

promise! The same Lord who said, "Without Me ye can do nothing," now makes this all-sufficient promise. Shall we not expect power? He will give it. *According to our work so shall be our power.* We need not expect power to preach, or to be an overseer of the flock, or to be an educator, or to be a reformer, unless the Lord calls us to that particular work. The call to each includes the promised power for His work. The fire engines of the city, the passenger and freight engines in the yards or on the road, and the immense stationary engines in shops and factories, all have steam and power, but to each according to its capacity and service. Let us rejoice in the fact that our Lord, "whose we are and whom we serve," has said, "Ye shall receive power."

II.

ORIGIN OF POWER.

"Ye shall receive power."—ACTS i. 8.

Having answered the question—"Who shall receive power?"—our present effort shall be to learn something of the *origin* and *nature* of this power. It is of vital importance to know what this power is and whence it comes. In our material surrounding we are prone to confuse true power with some of the most prominent means through which it operates. A negative discussion will enable us to distinguish between these and the real source of power. As in the first chapter, so now, the letters of the word power will outline our thoughts. And first we note that this power is not

PHYSICAL.

Stephen possessed this power in a high degree. Physically he was overcome by the violence of men. Had his power been physical, as was that of Samson, the enemy could not have stood before him. Samson had power to kill

Memory Talks on Spiritual Power

the enemies of God; Stephen had power to die a witness for the truth at the hand of his enemies. The one slew more at his death than during his life; the other by his death revealed the way of life to more than he could have done by living.

These few disciples with so many bitter enemies might readily have thought physical power the one thing needful. But they came to know that it is not by might, nor by force of arms, that the Nazarite-follower overcomes. "Put up thy sword into the sheath," has a significance deeper than mere physical resistance to the personal assailants of our Lord in the garden. We err, as did Peter, when we determine to do the Master's work by physical force and mental energy, when like him we try to substitute outward zeal for lack of inward communion with Christ, or when we rely on numbers in our churches and societies in winning souls.

The power of the church is not in numbers. Multitudes went out and in at the beautiful gate of the temple, but only Peter and John had power to heal the "lame" man. No number of men can furnish power like that promised the disciples. At the time of this promise the membership of the church was small, but it was only a brief period until the number came to be about five thousand, and we have the further

Power and Promise

testimony that multitudes both of men and women were added to the Lord. There is a power in numbers, but it is not *the power*. God can help, whether with many, or few, or with them who have no power at all. Even after the twenty and two thousand of Gideon's army had turned back nine thousand seven hundred more were rejected, but the remaining three hundred accomplished the work.

How faithless it is for members of small churches to become dissatisfied because so few in number. There was a time when the few members of what is to-day one of the largest denominations came together for conference. They were discouraged and almost ready to disband when one brother arose and said, "I'm nothing, and can do nothing." A second followed with a similar speech. But a third, looking beyond himself and mere numbers, arose, and pointing to the former speakers said, "You are nothing, and you are nothing, and I feel that I am nothing, but God is one. Now let us place these three ciphers at His right hand, and it will equal a thousand." The speech had the desired effect. Being few and realizing their weakness, they relied upon God for strength. To-day that denomination is strong in numbers, rich in faith and grace, and almost world-wide in effort for Christ.

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Sanballat and Tobiah sneered at Nehemiah and his few men, saying, "What mean these feeble Jews?" But the record is: "So built we the wall." Whatever estimate the world may place on numbers, certain it is that the power of the Christian church comes from a higher source. Why should any Christian, or company of Christians, however small, hesitate or doubt? The Master says, "Ye (no number specified) shall receive power." Is your society small? Are there but few members in your congregation? Then hear the promise, "Ye shall receive power." This promised power is not physical. It is not the power of numbers. No more is it the power of

ORGANIZATION.

On that great day of Pentecost when the three thousand were converted only a few Christians were there. They had no special organization. They had no priesthood with its courses and its customs. Neither were they laboring as an organized body when it is said, "Believers were the more added to the Lord; multitudes both of men and women." They were all of one accord in Solomon's porch, but as to organization, they were insignificant as compared with the council and senate of the children of Israel which sought to defeat their work.

Power and Promise

There is power in organization. A scattering, rambling mob cannot withstand the onset of a well-organized army. At the entrance of a long bridge was seen the following notice: "No company or organized body of men shall keep step while crossing the bridge." The reason was plain. The structure was not strong enough to resist the united tread of an organized body. Men everywhere recognize the power of organization. Ours is a day of organization. Laboring men organize. Business and political men organize. The social life is organized. And there never was a time when the church was more thoroughly organized, than at present; yet, this is not the source of her power.

The fact that organization is so needful and useful renders it all the more necessary to distinguish between it and the true source of power. Yet it has nothing more to do with producing this promised power, than the wire and trolley have to do with producing the liquid current which they convey to the motor of the car. A city may have well-laid tracks, poles set and wires strung, upholstered cars of best quality all along the line, motormen and conductors well trained and well paid, and yet to "move the masses" there is one thing lacking—power. The same city may have well-organized churches,

Memory Talks on Spiritual Power

stationed in every ward, manned with learned ministers, but to "reach the masses" there is still one thing needful—power. How excellent and necessary the cars, the wires, the men, but how useless when the current is obstructed! What great store we set by the many and excellent organizations in the church. Useful? Yes. Scriptural? Yes. But perfect as they are, these do not constitute the power of the church. The promised power is another thing.

A few years ago in a city of over 40,000 inhabitants there seemed to be a general awakening and concern in the various churches for the unsaved, and many of them were already asking the way. The ministers of the city, above thirty in number, in their association, conceived a new plan of doing the work of the winter, that seemed promising. The old method of each man doing the work of an evangelist—and building the wall before his own door—seemed so slow and feeble. There was not power enough in this apparently disorganized method. Whereupon it was agreed that all denominational differences should be laid aside; that there be appointed a central committee, (all the ministers being subject to appointments by the same); that the city be divided into districts and the churches into groups of four or five; and that union meetings be held for at least a week in each

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church. The plan was completed and announced in the city press. It seemed to meet with the approval of all. The universal verdict was that this thoroughly organized effort surely would add to the church many of such as should be saved. The meetings commenced. The people attended. The ministers went from group to group as appointed by the central committee. Never did they preach more eloquently. Many converts? So far as could be determined, there was not one. Nor for the rest of that autumn and winter did there seem to be any power. A most remarkable condition. Such had not been the experience in previous years—nor has it been since. No fault can be charged against the united effort. It lay rather in the *false notion* as to the true source of power. At an after meeting of the ministerial association, the moral was fully appreciated, “Not by might nor by power.” Let it be noted still further that the power of the church—as promised by the Master—does not consist in

WEALTH.

The incident in the history of Peter and John, already cited, is to the point. At the beautiful gate of the temple lay the lame man. The structure itself was the representation of wealth. A magnificent building! And this its most

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beautiful gate. There the lame man daily had been laid. But all to no avail, except he received occasional alms. All the wealth of Jew and Roman represented by that costly temple could not cure. Of all those passing by, none could do more than give the coin. There comes a day, however, when two men appear on the scene with neither "silver nor gold" but with power not purchased with money. They are poor. They are plain, blunt men; but they have an order on the richest firm in the universe. They are authorized to represent and to use the name of the Cashier in every emergency. He has assured them, "Whatsoever ye shall ask in My name, that I will do." They need not hesitate in saying, as did that other servant, (Phil. 4:19) "My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

Here, too, is the source of supply for the church. One has fittingly noted the following analysis of this text: "My God"—the banker, "shall supply"—promissory note, "all your need"—the amount, "according to His riches"—the capital, "in glory"—the location, "by Christ Jesus"—the cashier. In this firm there are three: God the Father to whom the earth and the fulness thereof, the world, and they that dwell therein, belong; the Son who holds all the power in earth and heaven; the Spirit the dis-

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penser of all wisdom. Well might Peter say to the lame man, "Silver and gold have I none, in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk." In everyday parlance he could say, "I have no loose change, but I have credit for anything your soul or body needs." This is the normal condition of the genuine Christian and of the true church. The power is not in ready cash, but in an unlimited "bank stock." If any lack wisdom, let him ask of God. If any man is weak, My grace is sufficient for him. Is any in need? My God shall supply according to His riches in glory.

Money in hand is everything to the world. "Rich," "rich," "rich," is the key-note of the natural man, and how easily Christians are carried away with the idea that wealth is power. True, it is one of the necessary means of carrying on the work of the church, but no amount of money can supply or secure the power necessary to convert a soul. Simon thought to obtain this power by money, but received a severe rebuke for thinking that the gift of God may be purchased. Is it not true that many Christians have mistaken notions as to the relation of money and the real power in the church? We are all too much inclined to rely upon elegantly furnished churches, costly organs, paid choirs, and stylish ministers, for success; but if what we call success is

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the salvation of souls, these alone will never accomplish the end. The lofty belfry may reverberate with the melodious strains of bells chiming notes in a harmony that would melt the rocks,—“Nearer my God to Thee,”—or “Jesus lover of my soul.” The walls of our churches may resound with the sweet melody of well-trained voices, and our pulpits glisten with the cloth, but to no avail without the true power,—the promised power.

It is true that a certain amount of money is necessary to establish and maintain church work in these days, and the building of every congregation should be as well furnished as the finest home among its members, but how important to understand that this is not the needed power. Frequently where wealth is most in evidence there is least power in saving the perishing. It is not an uncommon thing to see congregations strong in numbers, thoroughly organized, and rich in financial support, yet fruitless in conversions; while within a few blocks a rescue mission, struggling for money to meet the monthly rental, is daily saving souls.

There is no little significance in the incident related in Peloubet's Notes, as to how Thomas Aquinas once came to Pope Innocent IV. and was shown through all the sumptuously furnished rooms of the papal palace. He became

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fatigued and dazed as was the Queen of Sheba when she had witnessed the riches of Solomon's kingdom. "See, Thomas," said the Pope, "see, the church can no more say as it did in those first days, 'Silver and gold have I none.'" "True, Holy Father," said Thomas Aquinas, "but the church of the present day can hardly say to a lame man what the church of the first days said, — 'Arise and walk.'" It is not in the mind of the writer to ignore the importance of physical energy, or numerical strength, or organization, or wealth, in the Master's work; but to emphasize the distinction between these and the real source of power. Again it is important to note that the source of her power is not in

EDUCATION.

The rulers of the Jews marveled when they saw that Peter and John were "unlearned and ignorant men." Acts 4:13. It astonished them that these men could perform such wonderful works. About them was a manifest power in speech and works that cannot be accounted for unless they are men of unusual wisdom and superior learning; but they are not; they are "unlearned and ignorant." How can we account for their marvelous works? And in this it is true as in other things, "Marvels never cease." In the church to-day as among the early Christians

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the Master makes use of many who are neither scientists, nor philosophers, nor rhetoricians. Like as the young man at Philips academy, Andover, who was so dull that after years of struggling effort he could not pass the examination for college and was finally transferred to the theological seminary, only to fail as he did in the academy. Yet, while in these schools he was used in doing a greater work for the Master by establishing Sabbath-schools and leading men to Christ than all the other students and professors combined. Finally being sent to a churchless, Christless town to work he was successful in leading the whole community to salvation. Like as Peter and John and many others so this young man, though "unlearned and ignorant," had power—even *the* power.

Education is constantly used of Christ as a means of unspeakable *value*, but apart from the promised power it is as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. The efforts of education without this power are as fruitless as the fingering of a musician on an airless instrument. But He who can use unlearned and ignorant men so mightily, can use to His glory the learned.

While, therefore, many of those to whom this promise came, and who received the power, were not the learned men of the age, yet the Lord arrests Saul of Tarsus and harnesses his education

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for the work of the kingdom. Yet even he did not labor with the "enticing words of man's wisdom." Many congregations of professing Christians and many ordained servants, mistakenly rest on their superior education. Some denominations boast of an educated ministry, while others of a less mental furnishing and culture enjoy and exercise to a fuller extent the converting and edifying power. Of the former it can be said their winning for Christ is thousands,—of the latter, ten thousands.

Is it necessary to have a course in a school of theology, and elocutionary training, before one attempts to tell the story of Jesus and His love? Must we have a professional choir, an elegantly furnished church, and a large membership, in order to do service for the Master? Not at all. Far be it from me to speak lightly of these things. They are useful and have been highly honored in the service of the Lord. But they must not be exalted above the real power. If possible make your church beautiful within and without. Secure the best-trained Christian choir possible. The praise service is too important to be performed in less than the best manner.

Get education? Yes, all you can in the pulpit and pew. Knowledge is power. We honor education, and set much store by him who has it,

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We glory in it as individuals, and as a race. We are ready to join with Bushnell and say, "Man conquers the sea and its storms. He harnesses the lightning. He bids the rocks dissolve, and summons the secret atoms to give up their names and laws. He subdues the forces of the world, and compels the forces of the waters and of the fires to be his servants." There is a power in education, and how useful it can be in the Master's service! But it is not the source of the church's success in subduing Satan and liberating souls from his bondage.

This promised power and education are not antagonistic nor are they inseparable in Christian work. The power can use the ordinary fisherman or the humble peasant or the sage and scholar with astonishing results. Education with the power is mighty; without it, a failure. Nor does this power have its source in a

REPUTATION FOR RELIGION.

We have read of a church with a reputation for religion and yet the divine criticism was "Thou art dead." (Rev. 3: 1.)

An imaginary case! An exceptional case! Just the contrary. It is a representative case. It is true of many churches and many individuals: "Thou hast a name that thou livest and art dead." The Jews were religious. They went to

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the temple at the hour of prayer, but did not possess the power to do for the lame man at the beautiful gate what Peter and John did. They had a reputation for religion. The sons of one Sceva, a Jew, and chief of the Priests (Acts 15: 13-16), attempted some work under the name, or reputation, of Christianity, saying: "We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preaches," but the effort was a miserable failure. They were only mocked by the evil spirit. "Jesus I know and Paul I know; but who are you?" They used the name of Jesus whom Paul preached, but were utterly powerless in the presence of evil. The name of Jesus pronounced by one not His representative is nothing. Jesus in the life is the power of Jesus in the labor. "If ye abide in Me and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you." (Jno. 15: 7.)

Many congregations and individuals are noted for their religion; their orthodox creeds, their faithful loyalty, and doctrine and laws, but they do not many mighty works. A name that they live, but are dead. Is it not true of many good conscientious Christians that, with all, the power is lacking? Already ye are clean. Ye are Christians, but not endued with power from on high. There may be, and too often is, religion and the reputation for religion without the promised

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power,—the power needful for efficient service. Is it not largely due to mistaking our physical forces, numbers, organizations, wealth, education and religious reputation, for the true source of power which is the Holy Ghost? Our text says,—“Ye shall receive power *after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you.*”

Here is the true source of power. It is from on high. The power is nothing less than that of the Holy Ghost. Not a mere force or influence but the Third Person of the Godhead. He it is who can utilize our physical energy and numbers. By Him our organizations are filled with life and power, and our wealth turned to profitable account. He sanctifies education and culture, and fills religious reputation with real Christian character, but without Him these are nothing. One has expressed the thought thus,—“All means which the church may use for the salvation of man without the Spirit in them are like a body without life; like a locomotive without steam; like a watch without a mainspring; like an organ without air; like nature without the life-giving power of the sun. However beautiful, unique, antiquated, united, extensive, wealthy, intellectual; however patronized and supported by the wise, the great, and the good, if the Spirit is absent from them, they will fail to accomplish the end desired.” There is no fit-

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ness for service until endued with power from on high. Without this says Arthur in "The Tongue of Fire," "Our wealth, influence, facilities are ships of war and ammunition, without guns or men. Our ardor, talent, truth, are men and guns without fire." It is not by might nor by power but by My Spirit.

Not by the might or power of material things or human talents, but by the power of the Spirit. This is the power that makes life useful and efficient. This it is, and this only, which will enable the servants of God to turn this selfish, ungodly, sin-cursed world "upside down."

III.

WORKINGS OF POWER.

"Ye shall receive power."—ACTS i. 8.

In our last chapter we considered the question,—“What is this power as to its Origin and Nature?” Now, we are to inquire as to its Workings or Use? Again let the word power outline our study. Note first that this promised power is more than

PROFESSING AND PERSEVERING POWER.

No man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost. (1 Cor. 12: 3.) By the Spirit of God we are born again. (Jno. 3: 5.) By the power of God's Spirit we are kept through faith unto salvation. By His Spirit God holds up the faithful just as truly as He picks up the fallen. He *converts* the sinner, and He *consecrates* the saint. He delivers no one *from the grave* that He does not start toward *glory*. He hath begun a good work, and He will finish it. Satan may desire to have us that he may sift us as wheat, but it is by the power of the Spirit, that our faith fails not. As at springtime the dormant

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seeds are brought into life by the warming sun and the refreshing showers, so our souls, naturally dead in trespasses and sins, are regenerated by the Spirit of God. As the rain and dew from heaven water the plants of the field, sustaining life, and imparting vigor, so the Spirit of God imparts to us growth and strength. Thus it was with Enoch and Noah, with Moses and David, with Naomi and Ruth, with Hannah and Elisabeth.

But to these disciples and early Christians, to their children, and to all that are afar off—even to as many as the Lord our God shall call—there is promise of more than that persevering power. Were they not already Christians to whom Christ said: “And, behold I send the promise of My Father upon you, but tarry ye here in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high”? Were not *they* born again—were they not leading the Christian life, to whom the word came, “Ye shall receive power”? Did not the Holy Ghost, which is the promise of the Father, fall upon the Samaritans in a special manner after they had received the word, and were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus? (Acts 8:14–17.) In like manner those Ephesian disciples received a special baptism of the Holy Spirit. (Acts 19:6.)

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There can be no doubt that there is a fulness of the Spirit meant by this promised power which all Christians do not possess. If, therefore, we would be useful and efficient servants, we must have that enduing and in-filling of the Holy Ghost that is promised to "as many as the Lord shall call."

"The power" implies more than persevering power—more than power to lead a Christian life. It meant for the early disciples power to perform the great work just set before them. It means for us all power for the activities of life as well as power to live the life. Power to do the work of the Master. That work is briefly but emphatically announced and outlined in the twofold "marching orders" to the Church. (1) "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." (2) "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." To do this, Christians need, not a different kind, but a different degree of power than that necessary to maintain a Christian life. Persevering power, yes, but more,

PLANNING POWER.

Barnabas and Saul were sent forth by the Holy Ghost. (Acts 13:2.) Paul purposed in the spirit (Acts 19:21) to go to Jerusalem, and he could not be persuaded to change his

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plan. By the Spirit the disciples were sent forth; their tours and work were as truly planned as they were executed by the Spirit power. Power not simply to make the word effective when spoken, but also to direct as to the time and place of speaking it. The plan and work of their lives were under the direction of the Spirit as truly as their particular efforts. The command is, "Go ye into all the earth." The question for each disciple is, "Into what part of the earth shall I go?" It is true the Master maps out a general plan; "in Jerusalem, in all Judea, and in all Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth." Definite, yet indefinite. Peter must plan for his work; John for his; James and others for theirs.

The plans of the apostle were so strictly guarded by the Spirit that he was forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia, and when he assayed to go into Bithynia the Spirit suffered him not. The plan was that he should go to Troas, and see in the vision the Macedonian crying,—“Come over and help us.” (Acts 16: 6–10.) At a casual glance it might seem as if the apostles and helpers just “happened to be there” when the work was accomplished through their ministry. Not so. It was no accident. It was God’s plan. But were not the disciples

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responsible for their whereabouts? Barnabas and Paul were sent forth by the Holy Ghost. Paul purposed in the spirit to go to Jerusalem. Even so also, Carey and Taylor were sent forth by the Spirit. So still, ministers need this power to decide the place of locating no less than they do to perform the labor of the field when there; to plan their sermons as well as to proclaim them.

Nor does this planning end with utilizing our own talents and energies. It involves also the enlisting of others whose powers under the Spirit may be of greater use than our own in extending the kingdom. It was so with Barnabas at Antioch (Acts 11:25). "Much people were added unto the Lord" under his ministry, but he was not content, even when he had "exhorted them all." He is "full of the Spirit and of faith" and is eminently "successful," but he plans for greater things. Soon he is on his way "to Tarsus to seek Saul." The subsequent history shows that he planned well; better than he knew. These plans by men "full of the Holy Ghost and of faith" reach further and deeper, work better and last longer, than the planner contemplates. How different from the "plots" and "schemes" of the much envied "sharp," or "keen," or "shrewd" men of the world. What a wondrous history follows the

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bringing of Saul to Antioch! Antioch becomes a second Jerusalem, the headquarters of the missionary operations of the early church.

We all need this power to plan for the work. The Sabbath-school officers who seek not the Spirit in planning for the work of the school will have little power in conducting and performing the work. Can the teacher who does not look for this power in planning for her class expect to receive power for the thirty-minute recitation? The secret of power some young people have in conducting meetings is that they have power in planning for the meetings. The great difficulty with us is we like to lay our own plans. But if we expect to receive power in performing, let us go back further and seek power in planning. This applies to our lives as well as to our work. Many Christians fail in the general plan of life. They have chosen the wrong occupation or profession. They have decided what they would "*like* to be and do." They did not ask what God meant them to be and do. Then in vain they seek the power of the Spirit to be and do what they want to be and do.

Let us plan our lives and our work in the Spirit. The choosing and deciding on a general plan under His direction is not inconsistent with His guidance in the particular duties

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under that plan, but rather it is the only way to secure His co-operation. If congregations would seek the power of the Holy Ghost in locating and building their churches, they would have more assurance of power in their future work. It is generally the convenience and power of the "influential members" that are consulted, regardless of the needs and demands of the community, regardless of the opportunities of reaching the unsaved. God's interest is not considered. We locate ourselves. This land to-day is dotted over with churches which are little more than monuments to human plans. Hence signal failures! How much better to ask, "Whither shall we go up?" Planning power—yes, and more still,

OPERATING POWER.

Paul *purposed in spirit to go to Jerusalem*, (Acts 19: 21), and he was *bound in the spirit* (Acts 20:22) *while going*. But let us not mistake this case as a special one, nor dismiss the matter with the thought that for every day Christian service, we do not have the assurance of this power. If our work is worthy of a Christian; if its aim is the glory of God, it is worthy of this special power. Paul had his work, and we each have ours. Paul testified that he preached the gospel of Christ "by the

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power of the Spirit of God," not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power. He assured the Corinthians that there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit; that there are diversities of operations, but the same God that worketh all in all. Different gifts, and, of course, different operations. He gave some to be apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ. (Eph. 4:11-12.) Paul plants and Apollos waters. "It is not reason that we should leave the Word and serve tables," say the twelve; so seven *other* men, *full of the Holy Ghost*, are chosen for the table-service.

In every part of the work the Holy Ghost power is requisite. In serving tables, as well as in the ministry of the word. Not only to plan the work, but to do it when planned. The new kingdom is not one of plans and specifications only, but of work, of real activity. The Master's work is not done when an "orthodox" confession, or a "sound" creed is adopted. It is not enough to draw up a constitution, appoint committees, sign pledges, "to do whatever He would like to have me do." The meetings are to be attended. The Scripture is to be read un-

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derstandingly. The effective fervent prayer is to be offered, the sick are to be visited, sinners are to be brought to Christ, churches are to be built, missions are to be established and manned, hospitals and almshouses are to be established and supported, missionaries are to be maintained at home and abroad, the fatherless and widows are to be visited in their afflictions, and self is to be kept unspotted from the world. The command, "Go ye," with all it implies, is to be obeyed. What a diversity of operations! Yet there is a promise of power for each. Whatever the sphere in life, however humble the situation, it is true—if wanted—"Ye shall receive power." This is the promise, and by our meeting of the proper conditions—we can expect it; both to arrange the plan, and to perform the particulars under it.

This is true of the congregation as well as of the individual. The young Christian may have chosen the right course, or the congregation may be well organized and equipped, but lacking the power to go forward and accomplish the desired results. Standing on one of the numerous bridges which span the Altoona, Pa., railroad yards, we see, on the main tracks beneath us many engines, filled with that power-giving element—steam—passing this way and that with their burdens of freight. Near by, and all

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along the yards are other engines to all appearances as well equipped, but they are motionless, powerless, and for all immediate purposes, useless. What is the difference? These last named have all the necessary wheels and drivers and bolts and rivets, but lack the one thing needful. These great engines, in this respect, are like many Christians and congregations, which, full oft, are thoroughly equipped with wealth and intelligence and education and organization, but which are powerless, because they lack the one essential—the Holy Spirit.

These well-equipped engines are necessary agents of the steam power. By thus confining and definitely applying it the burdens of the world are moved. So the Master has need of well-equipped men and women. He can operate through them, can use well-organized congregations, their wealth and intelligence; but only when filled with the Holy Ghost. However wealthy and numerous the members of a congregation or society, however well-organized, however talented the individual, and thorough his education, it is still true: "Without Me ye can do nothing." "It is the Spirit that quickeneth." By Him we are quickened to life, and by Him we are strengthened for the duties of that life. How could Paul have endured the labor of those missionary journeys, that all-

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night sermon at Troas (Acts 20: 7-11), and that all-day service at Rome (Acts 28: 23), without the power of the Spirit?

It is a delight for the spiritual man to serve God. He never tires. Persecution only deepens the sense of duty and increases the joy of service. Difficulties multiply the efforts and strengthen the purpose to persevere. This is true of Carey and Taylor and Paton, as well as of Paul. In these missionary operations, in that long and severe trial, in that dangerous and eventful sea voyage, with its multitude of opportunities and its ever-increasing burden of responsibilities, the power of the Spirit was Paul's strength.

Again, that this power is *effective* in its operations is shown by the Scriptural record. The apostle reminds the Thessalonians of the results of his labor among them. "For our gospel come not unto you in word but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance, and ye became followers of us and the Lord." (1 Thes. 1: 5, 6.) Here are the results pointed out. The end justifies the work. It is not enough that the gospel come in word only, but in power and in the Holy Ghost. Paul was with the Corinthians in weakness and in fear and in much trembling. It is the power of the Spirit that brings the individual or the

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united effort to a successful issue. The promised power is not only for planning and operating, but for an *efficient* ending of the work.

It may not be success in the eyes of men, but it will be the accomplishing of the work that God designed to be done. The results reached are not always what we desire or expect but what God pleases. The commission of the Christian is similar to that of the prophet: "I do send thee unto them, whether they will hear or whether they will forbear." One has observed that Peter, full of power, preaches, and thousands are converted. Steven, full of power, preaches, and is stoned to death. The "forbearing" is often the most conclusive evidence that the messenger is full of power by the Spirit of the Lord.

Some suggest, that because no church was organized at Athens, the apostle made a mistake in going there and addressing the Athenians as he did, but is not this an evidence of the truth he himself announces: "For behold your calling, brethren, how that not many wise after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called"? (1 Cor. 1:26.) "Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, saying, Go unto this people and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive." (Acts 28:25, 26.) Think not that, "his spirit was

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stirred in him," for nothing. "Some mocked, others said, We will hear thee again, and certain men clave unto him and believed." Here are the usual effects of the Spirit's work in preaching, "A savour of death unto death, and of life unto life." Had Paul not been under the power of the Spirit he might have adjusted himself and his preaching to the demands of the Athenians and have "secured an organization," but he declares unto them the "unknown God," and the "resurrection of the dead," thereby doing the work for which the Holy Ghost "sent him forth." The efficiency of this power is vindicated just as much where men *forbear* as where they *bear*—when men refuse as when they hear. The power is as much present when the dust of condemnation is shaken off the feet, as when the water of baptism is administered.

This fact is not to be mistakenly applied as consolation by those who, laboring merely by the "energy of the flesh," have actually failed in doing efficiently the Lord's work. But on the other hand it is to be used as an incentive to seek the presence and power of the Spirit that our apparent failures may be triumphant victories. Just in proportion as the Christian and the church possess this power, are they efficient. There is a volume of

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meaning in the Master's question, "Who then is that faithful and wise steward?" Not only faithful, but wise—prudent. And in preparing them for the great work of the church, He would certainly provide the necessary wisdom. But "whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye; for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost." How often our planning and operating are in vain, and even bungling, because we have not trusted to the Spirit's power for the results. We have over-done or undone; we have spoken too often, or not often enough. Faithful? yes, but be wise as well. Seek that wisdom that cometh from above; that wisdom which the Spirit of God alone can give. Paul was endued with this wisdom by the Holy Ghost, and was correspondingly efficient in his own defense, and in the defense and diffusion of the gospel. He was "all things" to all men; preaching Christ, "warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom." As it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps, neither is it in the Christian that worketh to direct his efforts to a successful issue. He may plant and water, but God giveth the increase.

But we are assured by the history of the early church and by the labor of thousands in later days, that he who drinks deep of the foun-

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tain of spiritual power will never be a failure. All he does shall prosper well. Inefficiency is simply a synonym for lack of dependence on the Holy Spirit.

In "Secret of a Happy Life" we read of the little girl at the idiot asylum. In the dumb-bell exercise, where every movement was perfect, the contrast between her movements and that of the others in the drill, was so marked that an explanation was sought, and it was found that the child had no more strength or skill than the others, but because of her weakness and submission, the director, who had planned the exercise, stood behind her, supporting her arms, and directing her every movement. So this promise of the Father brings with it skill to plan and strength to do efficiently the Lord's work. "Unless the Lord the house shall build, the weary builders toil in vain. Unless the Lord the city shield, the guards a useless watch maintain." (Ps. 127:1.)

Again this operating power is especially marked in the work of *witness-bearing*. The promise is "Ye shall receive power," that ye may be "witnesses unto Me." Witnesses of what He had said, and had done, and of what He is—His doctrine, His death, and His resurrection. How closely associated is the duty and privilege of witness-bearing with the promise of

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spiritual power. After Christ meets with the disciples, and has opened their understanding, He tells them what and where they are to preach, saying: "*Ye are witnesses* of these things, and behold I send the promise of My Father upon you." (Luke 24: 48, 49.) Before this He had told them that when the Comforter is come He shall testify of Me, and ye also, shall bear *witness*. (Jno. 15: 26, 27.) Then Peter and the other apostles recognize their position, and inform the council, saying: "We are witnesses of these things, and so is also the Holy Ghost." (Acts 5: 32.)

They are witnesses, but not alone, not in their own strength. The Holy Ghost is also witness, not only in His coming as evidence of Christ's acceptance by the Father, but in His falling upon and baptizing the disciples, and filling them with the power from on high. When the apostles, with great power, gave the witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and spoke the word of God with boldness, we note it was immediately after they had been filled with the Holy Ghost. (Acts 4: 31-33.)

This, too, explains the conduct of Peter. Trusting in himself, he thrice denied his Lord. (Matt. 24: 69-74.) But when he had received power, he stood before the great audience and thrust them *hard* with this scathing accusation:

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“Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles, and wonders, and signs, which God did by Him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know, Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.” (Acts 2: 22, 23.)

A scene not unlike that picture of the prophet Micah when he said: “But truly I am full of power by the Spirit of the Lord, and of judgment and of might to declare unto Jacob his transgression and to Israel his sin.” (Micah 3: 8.)

Paul said, “I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ.” (Rom. 1: 16.) And by the witnessing power of the Holy Spirit, he was enabled to verify this saying in his life and work. He deemed it of more value than his natural life to have the privilege of testifying. “None of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.” (Acts 20: 24-27.) He will not be hindered in his witness-bearing, either by his friends or enemies. His friends could not dissuade him from going to Jerusalem. (Acts 21: 13.) Nor could his enemies silence him when he was there. As Acts 22nd chapter in-

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dicates, he is not ashamed to own the gospel and tell his interest in it. Even before the council and the rulers, Felix, Festus and Agrippa, he witnessed the more boldly. And on that voyage, and in that "hired house," he is still in "bonds for Christ," until, through it all, and even "unto death," he verifies the fact, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ."

It is as truly the *privilege* of every Christian *to have* this witnessing power as it is the *duty* of every Christian *to bear witness*. To this witness-bearing there is no limit. It is not one or two, we are *all* witnesses. It is not to be done only when convenient, or at pleasure, but even unto death. Not simply in convenient places, but in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth. (Acts 1:8.) Nor is there any limit to the power. "Ye shall receive power; for the promise is unto you, and your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." Not only is this planning and operating power, but it is also

WATCHING POWER.

Watching against dangers and temptations and errors. Before departing to Jerusalem Paul warned the elders of the church at Ephesus to take heed unto themselves and to all the flock

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over which the Holy Ghost had made them over-seers. *Watch* against grievous wolves, and men speaking perverse things. (Acts 20:28, 32.) By the Holy Ghost they were made over-seers, and by that same power they can *take heed* to themselves and *watch* the grievous wolves. The Master Himself tells the disciples to beware of false prophets. We are commanded to "Try the spirits whether they are of God." How necessary this power to watch, and how important to seek the promised power. "Unless the Lord the city shield, the guards a useless watch maintain." In this day of materialism and of liberal thought, the power to watch is especially important.

On the other hand, the servants of Christ can expect power to watch for opportunities of doing good. "Take heed" not only to yourselves, but to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, *to feed the church of God*. Watch, therefore, to profit the church, as well as to protect. The Holy Ghost made them over-seers to watch for souls as truly as to watch for wolves. For some reason, many well-meaning church officers and members are exceedingly anxious to watch for danger points, while they seem wholly unconcerned about the opportunities for doing good.

Like that erratic Presbyterian who wished to

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be chosen as an elder, and acknowledged to his pastor that he could neither pray nor visit the sick, but he could object to some of "them new things" in the church. For like reasons many God-given *opportunities* are let pass while our time is occupied with criticising and discussing questions long ago settled, or such as never will be settled, or those of little concern to us. Not long ago, while coming over the Allegheny Mountains from the west, the writer and other passengers were both annoyed and amused by a woman's frequent questions concerning the famous horse-shoe curve on the Pennsylvania railroad. She was all excitement, it was her first trip over this road. For miles she disturbed those all about her with questions. No sooner had we emerged from the tunnel and reached the top of the slope than she looked down into that deep gorge and began at once to condemn the "greed and recklessness of any corporation that would construct a railroad in such a frightful and dangerous place"; so she continued her downward look and complaint until the curve was in sight when her criticising eyes were fixed on the, "no trespassing" signboard far below at the head of the reservoir. Surmising what it was for, she immediately began a discussion as to whether that was sufficient protection to the water supply of the city: "If I lived in Altoona

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and used that water I would have it better protected than that," she said. As she thus quibbled and complained, that fine long train, with its skilful engineer and experienced crew, came gliding along with security and rapidity, on its rock-bed track, turning all the curves gracefully and successfully, but the poor woman had lost one of the grandest opportunities of her life. She never once thought of the remarkable skill in surveying and building such a road by "annihilating" the mountains, nor did she even get a glimpse of that magnificent view, which God had spread out before her, of mountains and valleys and forests, wrapped in their mantle of green and yellow, tinged with the rising sun, reaching into the distance and blending into the blue canopy of heaven. This incident is a solemn picture of many Christians, who to-day seem anxious to find greater opportunities, but are continually irritated over disputed points, and quibble over technicalities, while the church of Christ moves rapidly and securely along until, for them, great and sacred opportunities are forever gone.

Men filled with the Holy Ghost are ready to detect error, and to avoid it, but they are especially watchful for the work; not any and every work, but the thing that will be of most use to the cause. They *watch for souls* as they who

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must give account, that they may do it with joy and not with grief. In this time of evangelistic effort and missionary zeal, when the whole world is lying in darkness, when from every side the Macedonian cries are coming, every congregation and every denomination, should be on the watch for opportunities of serving Christ the best possible.

In many respects the life of a Christian resembles that of a fisherman. The skilful fisherman is on the watch for danger points, but his main object is to find "good spots." He watches for every advantage, and soon learns to abandon what will interfere with success. He watches for good days, as well as good places; for suitable baits, and the best way and time to present them. He watches against a noisy, boisterous display of tackling and self. In fact, he hides himself. Christian, go to the fisherman and learn his ways. The same one who said "I will make you fishers of men," said, "Ye shall receive power."

But this power is also

ENLIGHTENING POWER.

Christ opened the understanding of the disciples that they might understand the Scriptures. (Luke 24: 25.) If it is expedient that He go away that the Comforter come, surely the Com-

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forter, which is the Holy Ghost, will open the understanding of Christ's people.

"He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it unto you." (Jno. 16: 10.) Lydia's heart was opened that she attended unto the things which were spoken by Paul. But there is an enlightenment beyond that which leads to conviction of sin and conscious need of a Savior. These disciples, in order to write the gospel for future ages, must be enabled to recall what the Lord has said and done, and they must be taught the many things to write. For this very purpose the Holy Ghost is given to them. "He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you." (Jno. 14: 26.) This is special preparation of the apostles for giving the gospel to the world, but we are living under the ministration of the Spirit—a glorious ministration—and shall He not open our understanding also that we may understand the Scriptures? Truly so.

He shall not impart any truth to us beyond that already revealed in the word, but He shall open our eyes that we may behold wondrous things out of the law. The same power that operates the car gives light to the passengers. So also the operating power of the church is the power that enlightens her members. He it is that teaches us the truth as it is in Jesus;

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shows us the difference between our ways and God's ways; our thoughts and God's thoughts. "The Spirit-promised rod out of the root of Jesse," is the spirit of *wisdom and understanding* and counsel, as well as that of *might*, the spirit of *knowledge* and of the fear of the Lord. (Isa. 11: 2, 3.)

One recently converted, but now a man mighty in the word, testified to the writer that one of the greatest surprises he met in the new life was the revelation of truth to him in the passages of scripture, which, in his former state of infidelity, had no meaning at all to him, except to perplex those who were seeking his salvation. As in this case, so in every other, it is true that, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." It also is true that, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things that God hath prepared for them that love Him." No, but, "God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit." (1 Cor. 2: 9, 10.) The natural eye may be keen, the natural ear perfect, but to such the deep things of God, which the Spirit revealeth, are invisible and inaudible.

The unschooled man opens his geometry, and with a keen eye traces the angles and lines. He

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sees the circles and segments clearly. But the meaning thereof is no more clear to him than to the blind man who simply lays his hand on the back of the book. "Understandest thou what thou readest?" "How can I?" Nor can the Christian read the word understandingly, nor hear the voice of God in the many visitations of Providence, except he receives the enlightening power of the Spirit to guide him.

At a phonographic entertainment, given recently, a child in the audience was delighted with the reproduction of "The Medley of National Airs" by the renowned Gilmore's Band. But she knew nothing of the famous Band, nor of the various airs of which the Medley consisted. She was unacquainted with the nature and workings of the instrument before her. She could see the funnel-shaped amplifying tube and, back of it, the box-like machine; here her vision ended. But the operator, seeing her interest, gave her personal instructions. He explained how that blank cylinder was made to revolve on the shaft, and how, on each revolution, that little "recorder" made the groove and left the impressions made by the vibrations of music striking the mantle in the "speaker." Then he pictured before her the great Band with its experienced and skilful leader and members, and its numerous musical instruments. To this was added an explanation

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of the music—its composition and harmony—and of the various nations represented in this “Medley of National Airs.” What a wonderful vision arose before her in comparison with the first view simply of the machine and the amplifying tube. She now had some knowledge of the marvelous invention and its great inventor. She had learned that music itself is a marvel no less than its instruments. She had come into a better understanding of those nations, with their varied histories. She was astonished at the wonderful revelations made to her. Such is the office of the Holy Spirit. The printed or spoken text may be interesting, but when the Comforter comes into the life, the vision is opened up to see, back of that text, the wisdom and power and love and goodness of God. In utter surprise we exclaim: “O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out.” (Rom. 11: 33.)

In our work, too, this enlightening power of the Spirit is *indispensable*. There are certain operations in the rudiments which seem plain to us, but in the fuller exercise of the principles of the kingdom, we are lost without the special guidance of the Spirit. An eminent instructor tells of a young student who could add, and subtract, and multiply, and divide

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when these various processes were indicated to him, but when given a practical example in which these processes were involved, yet not indicated, he was bewildered, and in his perplexity came to the teacher with a forlorn look and distressing exclamation: "How can I tell when to add and when to divide and multiply?" Is it not even so in the Master's work? We know many of the principles involved and much of the work to be done, but how can we know when to go to Samaria and when to the desert, when not "to go in to Bithynia," when not "to preach the word in Asia" and when "to go to Macedonia? The Teacher, the Guide will lead us. "Lo, I am with you always."

Once more, this is also

REWARDING POWER.

After they had received this promised power, the apostles, even when beaten by the council, departed "rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His sake." (Acts 5: 41.) Previous to this, they could not suffer the finger of scorn for His name. (Jno. 18: 27.) Why the change? They have received power. The Holy Ghost has come upon them, convincing them that the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us. Only by the power

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of God's Spirit could they be enabled to understand the meaning of the truth, afterward spoken to the church: "Unto you it is given, in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him but also to suffer for His sake." (Phil. 1:29.)

The office of a comforter is to reward the distressed with relief; to give strength and support in time of weakness; to compensate for every loss; to bring healing for every pain. The promise of "another Comforter" is not only the promise of one to guide us and give power in planning and operating efficiently, but one to reward us for every sacrifice made and every loss sustained in the seeking of this promised power. "I will send you another Comforter" to reward you for My absence and to compensate you for every physical pleasure abandoned and every "affection" and lust of the flesh "crucified" for My sake.

When at Antioch (Acts 13: 51) Paul and Barnabas were expelled by persecution, it is said they were full of joy. How can we account for this joy? Persecution does not tend to joy. We would expect them to be full of gloom and sadness, but the explanation is found in the same verse. They were "filled with joy and *with the Holy Ghost*." "Filled with the Holy Ghost" accounts for the fulness of joy. There is a "rewarding power" over which outward cir-

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cumstances have no control. The presence and fulness of the Holy Ghost brings that power. The Lord meant that His followers should have this power for adverse and otherwise discouraging times; for He says: "Rejoice and be exceedingly glad for great is your reward in heaven; for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." (Matt. 5:12.) The command "to rejoice and be exceeding glad" implies the promise of power to fulfil the command. That power the Spirit alone can give. In the work of the kingdom, these and all others will find reward by the Spirit of God.

In this way the service of the Master brings its own reward. To seek and expect reward is natural. The natural man can find reward in money, worldly honor, political power, or physical pleasure. In the service of God the spiritual man finds great pleasure and unspeakable reward. To do the Master's will is his meat and drink. He is not satisfied with mere commendation from his co-laborers. This may encourage him but it does not satisfy. There must be the inner consciousness of doing the Master's will. This, the Spirit alone can give. For what man knoweth the things of man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man but the Spirit of God. Now we have received not the spirit

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of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things which are freely given to us of God. While the spirit of the world, which we have not received, begets doubt, perplexity, and despair, the Spirit of God brings hope, joy, and peace. The apostles have received many stripes, but even at midnight their fellow prisoners are stirred with songs of praise to God.

In the daily service of the Christian there must be greater reward than any earthly or material considerations can afford. Such considerations may induce some to take up the activities of the Christian church, but how soon all such persons become faint and weary, and often, like the young man, utterly fall. Only such as through sanctification of the Spirit are called to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, can and do, either in prosperity or adversity, mount up with wings as eagles, or run and not be weary, and walk and not faint.

The Christian worker, who is actuated only by visible results or material benefits, has no satisfaction of heart and soul, such as the Spirit brings. True he has a reward. "Verily they have their reward." The reputation of a growing congregation, of an eloquent preacher, or the receiving of a large salary, are not such rewards as the Spirit sets before the minister of

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the gospel. Certainly he rejoices to see his congregation grow in numbers, he is pleased to learn that his sermons are appreciated. As a material support he must necessarily receive a salary, but these are his encouragements and physical support, not his reward. By this promised power he is lifted above these earthly considerations, and all he does is for the glory of God. This is the aim of all service and of the whole life. When, by power of the Spirit, this is accomplished there is that inner consciousness and satisfaction of heart which always causes the soul to rejoice.

By this power we are enabled to eat and drink to the glory of God, and to realize that whether we live we live unto the Lord, or whether we die we die unto the Lord. This is the power that rewards the efforts to save souls, whether to the eyes of men we have been successful or not.

The story is told of a minister preaching to an assembly of his brethern; and in order to direct their attention to the great motive from which they should act, and to the certainty of reward for the faithful, he represented to them something of the great day of judgment. Having spoken of Christ seated on His throne he described Him as speaking to His ministers, examining how they had preached and with what

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views they had undertaken and discharged the duties of the ministry. "What did you preach for?" "I preached, Lord, that I might keep a good living that was left by my father which, if I had not entered the ministry, would have been wholly lost to me and my family." Christ, the judge, addressed him: "Stand by, thou hast had thy reward." The question was addressed to another, "What did you preach for?" "Lord, I was applauded as a learned man, and I preached to keep up the reputation of an excellent orator, and an ingenious preacher." The answer of Christ to him also was, "Stand by, thou hast had thy reward." The judge puts the question to a third, "And what did you preach for?" "Lord" saith he, "I neither aimed at the great things of this world, though I was thankful for the conveniences of this life which Thou gavest me, nor did I preach that I might gain the character of a wit, or of a man of parts, or of a fine scholar, but I preached in compassion to souls, and to please and honor Thee." The judge was now described as calling out, "Room, men, room, angels! let this man come and sit by Me on the throne; he has owned and honored Me on earth and I will own and honor him through all the ages of eternity." For such a ministry as this, commended in the representation by the minister, the church of

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Christ and her individual members have the promise of power. Power to perform the duties involved, and power by the same Spirit to do the work,—“not with eye service as men-pleasers, but as the servants of Christ doing the will of God from the heart. Knowing that whatever good thing any man doeth the same shall he receive of the Lord.” (Eph. 6:6, 8.)

The Holy Spirit, like the Son, has His reward with Him and that Christian who receives the promise of the Father has not only power to continue, and to persevere, in the Christian life, but he also has power *to plan*, and to *operate* those plans, and more still, *watching*, *enlightening*, and *rewarding* power.

Having seen, thus, something of what this promised power is, first as to its *origin*, and second as to its *workings*, the most practical question remains to be considered, viz., “*How can we obtain this power?*”

IV.

ENUNCIATION OF POWER.

"Ye shall receive power."—ACTS. 1.8.

Our effort in this chapter shall be to answer the question—How is spiritual power secured? How can I get it? This is the personal and practical question for the Christian. It is not enough to learn of the origin and workings of this power. Such knowledge begets a desire to possess it; but the all-important question is the manner of appropriating it to the Christian life and service.

Our aim is to serve the Master. In ourselves we have no power. Our physical, mental and social faculties are nothing in themselves. It has been shown that numbers, organization, wealth, education and religious reputation are useless when alone. All physical energy and activity in preaching and visiting and praying and singing are little more than industrious idleness, without spiritual power.

The uppermost question then is how to secure the power. The question is one, but the answer is two. There are the Godward and the manward

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sides. In this chapter we shall consider the first; the other will be considered later.

The divine side is seen in the promise of the Master. He says: "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." To understand more fully the Godward side in the pursuit of this power it will be necessary to note the nature of the promise. Let us again call up the word power by which to outline our thoughts.

First, note that this is a

PERTINENT PROMISE.

It is pertinent as to time. "But now I go my way to Him that sent Me." "But if I depart I will send Him unto you." (Jno. 16:5, 7.) And now, just as He is about to ascend, His last promise is, "Ye shall receive power." How appropriate the promise to the time. We do not wonder that He had occasion to say: "Sorrow hath filled your heart." It fills our hearts with sorrow to learn of the speedy and final departing of those whom we love and trust.

"It is hard to break the cords when love has bound the heart;

It is hard to speak these words, 'Must we forever part?'"

It is not difficult to see the drooping countenance of those disciples when from His sacred lips came the words: "Now I go my way to Him that sent Me." This is a sad and discouraging announcement after those years of

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fellowship in which they had reached the point of trust and obedience that, "whatsoever He saith," was a sufficient call to "do it."

They are grieved—sorrow fills their hearts—because *now* He is going His way. And while He had assured them that He was going to "prepare a place for them," yet they may not fully understand that other expression: "Whither I go ye can not come." At all events there was ample occasion for the sorrow-filled hearts at the announcement, "Now I go My way." But it is especially true in the Lord's kingdom that each loss has its compensation and each pain its healing. In this case and at this time there is compensation and comfort in the promise: "I will send you another Comforter." "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you."

The fitness of this promise appears, too, when we consider their immediate need, and the use to be made of the power. Already He had said: "Behold I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves." (Matt. 10:16.) Go your ways: behold I send you as lambs among wolves." (Luke 10:13.) "They shall put you out of the synagogues; yea, the time cometh; that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service." (Jno. 16:2.) In Paul's address before Agrippa (Acts 26:9-11), the

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testimony is given that, before his conversion, he had treated the followers of Christ just in this very way. Without this promised power the followers of Christ *never* could have endured such treatment. This alone enabled Stephen to hold out, even unto death. Nor could Paul himself have stood before the king and made this address, but for this power. This it was that tuned the voice and filled the prison with midnight melody by two despised men, beaten with many stripes and fastened in the stocks of the inner prison. What a surprise it must have been to the other prisoners to hear these songs from the abused men, instead of railing and cursing,—the usual “pastime” of prisoners! How could they account for it? Men torn and bleeding, thrust into the inner prison, fastened in the stocks, and yet singing! And that at midnight! Surely “much” crime has made them “mad.” No, not that. They have a power just at hand; a power appropriate to just such circumstances.

This promise is pertinent and,

OFFICIAL.

Our Lord says: “Ye shall receive power,” not “I hope you may,” nor “It would be good if you could”; but—“*Ye shall receive power.*” Before this, He had assured them, “If I depart

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I will send Him unto you." (Jno. 16:7.) And again, "When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth which proceedeth from the Father." (Jno. 15:26.) Christ, in making this promise, acts as spokesman for the Godhead. He is the Word of God. (Jno. 1:1.) "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us." (Jno. 1:14.) "Now," He says, "I go My way to Him that sent Me." (Jno. 16:5.) His part of the work on earth is done. He sends "another" from the Father. The Father, too, "will send" Him "in My name." (Jno. 14:26.) These facts show at once that the promise of power is official. Early in His ministry the Master verifies the fact that the Father had promised His Spirit by the prophet. When in the synagogue He read, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me," He testified, "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears." (Luke 4:18-21.) Here we meet the triune God. The Father *and* the Son send the Holy Spirit. And to put it in a brief Scripture, "The Holy Ghost whom the Father will send in My name." (Jno. 14:26.)

The disciples were told by our Lord not to depart from Jerusalem but wait for the promise of the Father. (Acts 1:4.) They did wait, and the promise came, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost. This assures them of the real-

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ity of the promise, and that Christ had received the promise of the Father. Then Peter, the spokesman for the disciples, immediately informs the Jews that "Jesus being by the right hand of God exalted and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath shed forth this which we now see and hear." (Acts 2:33.) And now Peter, assures all who shall "repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins" that they "shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." (Acts 2:38.)

This promise does not rest on the word of a private, unofficial person, it is not "hearsay," not an unauthorized rumor. It comes to us from headquarters, with the official stamp of the Godhead "whom the Father will send in My name," (Jno. 14:26), and restamped with the apostolic seal when Peter asserts that, "This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel—I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh." (Acts 2:17, 18.) And in the next breath he makes response to the question; "What shall we do?" in that all-embracing, reassuring combination of precept and promise; "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you and to your children, and to

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all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." (Acts 2:38, 39.) Reader, have you any doubt as to the authority of this promise? Then fall upon your knees and ask God to open your eyes to see that no man ever did, or, ever can speak as He who says: "Ye shall receive power."

Note, also, that this is a

WISE PROMISE.

This is not true of every official promise. Herod made a promise, and sealed it with an oath, but the folly of his promise was keenly felt when he heard the demand: "Give me here John Baptist's head in a charger." (Matt. 14:8.) But the wisdom of this power-promise appears in that it cannot be abused.

The power is its own safe guard. It can be used only when the possessor is actuated by right motives, and regulated by the will and principles of the Promiser. One cannot, if he would, use the power for self, nor in any way contrary to the will of the Master. The Spirit of God will rest in power only upon those who do His will.

The nature of the power vindicates the wisdom of the promise. Had the power been physical, the possessor might have misused it, or it could have been abused by the enemy as was

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that of Samson. Had it been the power of organization, or wealth, or education, or religious reputation, the recipients of the promise would have been limited, necessarily, by their environments, but the promised power comes with the Holy Ghost, and remains only while He remains.

Nor can this power be overcome by violence. Physical strength can be met and overcome by physical strength, but the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience, was overcome by Him who was "led by the Spirit into the wilderness." So still, His true followers can and will overcome by the same Spirit. Organization may be broken, wealth stolen, education met with education otherwise disposed, reputation blasted, but the man who possesses spiritual power cannot be robbed. Stephen is beset by enemies; but the more destructive they become the more power he obtains, until he can say: "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge."

The wisdom of the promise is also seen in that whether weak or strong; alone or in organization; poor or wealthy; unlearned or educated; with or without a reputation, the true follower of the meek and lowly Jesus, who meets the conditions, can be a recipient and possessor of this power. The pertinency of this promise,

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both as to time and use, is conclusive evidence of its wisdom.

Had the disciples been consulted, they would have had the "kingdom restored" with its temporal and material power, but in His wisdom the departing Lord promises them real "power," the power of the Spirit. What wiser offer could have been made? Neither physical power arising from great numbers, nor organization, nor wealth, nor education, nor religious reputation, nor even all of these combined, could have compared with this promised power in planning, and operating efficiently, and in rewarding these disciples and the entire church since. To do this there must be the presence and power of the Spirit. This explains that perplexing statement: "It is expedient for you that I go away, for if I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you, but if I depart I will send Him unto you." *A comforter* or advocate is one who gives help. When other things fail the Comforter is at hand with just the needed help.

Are we in danger? He warns. Are we in darkness? He guides. Are we in ignorance? He instructs. Are we in want? He supplies. Are we in weakness? He strengthens. Such is the help-power of the Holy Spirit.

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And note again that this is an

EXTRAORDINARY PROMISE.

It is extraordinary in its announcement. The great promise of the Old Testament was *Christ*. Him the *Father* declared, saying: "I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren." (Deut. 18:18.) The promise of the *Holy Spirit* is given by *both Father and Son*. "I will send Him unto you," says the Son. And again, "Whom the Father will send in My name." Again, the arrival of Christ on the earth was announced by angels and a star. The latter belongs to another kingdom than that to which we belong. The former belongs to another order of beings, but when the promised Holy Spirit comes to the earth, His arrival is announced, and He is introduced, not by a star in the distant, material heavens, not by angel-beings of another order, which depart after a hasty visit, but by "cloven tongues" and "other tongues." The tongue—the gift of speech—is the distinguishing feature of man, and while there is a normal man on the earth there will be speech, and so long as there are men on the earth the Holy Spirit will be here, for the promise reads: "He shall give you another Comforter that He may abide with you forever." Is it not significant that this peculiar and abiding

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symbol of speech is used in both a visible and audible way to introduce this peculiar and abiding gift from the Godhead?

It is an extraordinary announcement, not only as to the arrival of the Spirit but as to His work. Man is largely characterized by his speech. "Out of the fulness of the heart the mouth speaketh." And as a man "thinketh in his heart so is he." "Thy speech betrayeth thee" has a deeper significance than mere dialect or brogue. A spoken or written word is not the limit of speech. The movements and location of the body speak—though silently, yet distinctly. The speech is that which in general tells what a man is, and where he is; why he is what he is, and why he is where he is. When Peter "sat without in the palace" his words, his actions, and his location all told that he was a coward, and that he was trying to conceal his relation to his Lord. But when Peter appears before the multitude on the day of Pentecost his words and actions and location all testify that he is a different man, and that he is where he is for a very different purpose than to deny his Lord. Here is the initiatory evidence of the work of the Spirit. He came to use men as witnesses of "these things" of which He Himself is witness. (Acts 5:32.) These tongues, this faculty of speech, whether by word, action,

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or character, are the witness bearing agencies, and with these the Holy Ghost has to do. The speech may be by word of mouth or pen; by check or coin for missions; by anxiety and effort for the unsaved; or by the silent, unassuming, Christlike character, the living epistle; nevertheless, it is the man's speech. The tongue is servant of the body, of the heart, of the affections, of the mind, of the intellect, and of the soul.

The arrival of the Holy Spirit being announced by the symbol of the tongue has a wondrous significance. The star and angels which announce the birth of our Lord suggest His special and brief work on the earth, while the "tongue of fire," symbol of the Holy Spirit's arrival, is suggestive of the permanent work of Christ on the earth by the Holy Spirit.

The extraordinary nature of this promise appears again in the *intensive* and *extensive* application to man. His whole being—body and heart, soul and mind—is endued by the power of the Spirit for the Lord's service in which the tongue, the gift of speech, is the all important instrument.

This promise is not only extraordinary in its announcement but also in the effects which its fulfilment produces. While Christ was on the

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earth, He did many mighty works: He was the source of great comfort and strength to His followers. But, "He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and *greater than these* shall he do, because *I go to My Father.*" There must be some extraordinary change to take place in the believers after Christ goes to the Father. That word, "because I go to My Father" is very suggestive of another saying: "The Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified." (Jno. 7:39) Is not this the explanation? When Christ goes to the Father the Holy Spirit will be given and then "the works that I do and greater" shall be done. Christ exalted, by the power of His Spirit, can do greater works through His followers than He Himself did while in the flesh. Matthew Henry noted that, "Christ had healed with the hem of His garment, but Peter by his shadow, and Paul by the handkerchief that had touched him."

The very fact that Christ by the Holy Spirit can use these frail, earthly beings to conquer the world and bring men out of the bondage of sin is a greater work than He Himself did by His wonder-working miracle. His wonder-doings were of brief duration, but the "greater work" is continuing through the ages and extending

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“among all nations.” In this we see that the ordinary are the most *extraordinary* features of this promised power. When we read that the sun stood still upon Gibeon and the moon in the valley of Ajalon we are amazed, but the still greater wonder that they continue all these centuries in their regular courses, each doing its peculiar work, fails to elicit any surprise. In like manner the multitude were “confounded,” “amazed,” and marveled when they heard the early Christians speaking with “other tongues.” In this day we marvel at the miracles and great works of the disciples by the power of the Spirit. But we do not realize the extraordinary nature of that power exhibited in the lives of spiritual men. Peter says (1 Pet. 4:4) that the Gentiles thought “it strange” that the Christians did not “run with them to the same excess of riot.” Yet we do not appreciate the marvelous nature of the Spirit’s ordinary work in a human life of sobriety, purity, self-sacrifice and unceasing, efficient labor for Christ and His church.

Do we realize the remarkable nature of the ordinary operations of this power in the individual and the church? It is a perpetual power,—“That He may abide with you forever.” (Jno. 14:16.) It is an unlimited power,—“All things are

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possible to him that believeth." (Mark 9:23.) These facts have been exemplified in the lives and works of men such as Paul and Philip, Carey and Taylor, and thousands of others who have lived and labored from Peter to Paton.

Once more we note that this is a

RELIABLE PROMISE.

In establishing the reliability of a promise there are two things to be considered, viz:—the *sincerity* and the *ability* of the promiser. As to our Lord's sincerity there need be no doubt. We have only to hear His own words: "I tell you the *truth*: It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart I will send Him unto you." (Jno. 16:7.) He is sincere in the promise—I tell you the *truth*. He Himself is divine and cannot lie, yet He emphasizes this promise that its gravity may be recognized and the certainty of its fulfilment may be doubly certain. And long ago it was declared: "God is not a man that He should lie, nor the son of man that He should repent. Hath He said, and shall He not do it? Hath He spoken and shall He not make it good?" (Num. 23:19.) As to the ability of the promiser there is no less certainty. There can be no conflict-

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ing authority. Already it has been noted that the promise is official. It has not only the word of the Savior supporting it, but bears the very stamp of the Godhead. Hence there need be no fear of the authorities reconsidering the matter and recalling the promise of power.

Are you still in doubt as to His ability? Let Him speak for Himself:—"All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth." (Matt. 28:18.) "Yes, He has the power," you say, "but that was vouchsafed only to the early disciples." Hear again: "Lo I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." (Matt. 28:20.) "But," says one, "that is for special occasions; we can not expect it in every day life." Listen, the promise is sure: "I will *never* leave thee nor forsake thee." "The Lord is my helper and I will not fear what man shall do unto me." (Heb. 13:5, 6.) Another asks:—How can He be with me always and be my helper? By the Holy Spirit. Take as your own the promise of our text: "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." He is the "other Comforter" who shall "abide with you forever."

Thus this promised power is sufficient for every occasion and for all time. It is, therefore, a promise that is pertinent—just suiting us as

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to time and need; that is official—it comes from the very Godhead; that is wise—nothing better could have been promised; that is extraordinary—no promise equal to it; that is reliable—the Promiser is able and sincere. Like all the promises of God in Jesus Christ, this one is yea and amen “unto the glory of God.”

V.

RECEPTION OF POWER.

"Ye shall receive power."--ACTS i: 8.

In the last chapter we presented the "Godward side" in answer to the question: "How is spiritual power obtained?" Looking Godward we find that it comes by *promise*. And this promise is pertinent, official, wise, extraordinary and reliable.

Looking manward we learn that in order to secure this power certain conditions must be met. In considering these the word "Power" will again outline our thoughts.

First, there is the condition of

PRAYER.

Among the many promises the Father makes in connection with prayer, the Holy Ghost is especially mentioned. Our Lord says: "If ye then being evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that *ask* Him." (Luke 11:13.) One apostle tells of the "good things" that are the fruit of prayer, and this evangelist presents the Holy Spirit as the

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sum-total. Every other good gift is simply a part of the whole. That Christian or congregation that *asks* for the Holy Spirit, and asks aright, will receive the answer and all that is implied. In Him all good things are bound up, for He is the promise of the Father. He comes to take the place of the personal or bodily presence of our Lord. Christ Himself taught that it was expedient for Him to go away, that the Father and He might send the Holy Ghost in His name. He also teaches that the Father is willing, and at the same time able, to give the Holy Spirit to them that *ask* Him. In this, as in the requests of earthly children, the asking not only indicates but increases desire. Parents are not likely to thrust undesired gifts upon their children. They like to have the desire of the child expressed and developed by asking. We wonder why God has not given us power for life and His service as He has done others, and yet, we have never *asked* Him to do so, or if we have, our asking has been amiss. It has been only in form.

The teaching we receive from the word, as well as that which comes from those who have asked and received, is that the asking must be in sincerity. It comes from a heart-longing for more than a mere Christian existence, and readiness to sacrifice other desires for this one thing.

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We do not always know what we ask. It may be that this asking implies what the world calls a great calamity. Nevertheless, if we ask we shall receive, though it cost us the "right eye" or "the right hand."

Mr. Murray tells of a woman in Africa, who, on hearing an earnest consecration sermon, was much greived when at the close of the service the preacher asked how many were willing to give up everything for Christ. "If Christ," he says, "should demand that your husband be sent to China, or your little child to America, are you willing to submit?" After a long and vigorous struggle, she consented, but on her way home, and until midnight, the worried and perplexed woman prayed to God that He would give her that fulness of the Spirit, and that nearness to the Master, that she could cheerfully yield up all to Christ. At once the light came, and she was filled with power by the Spirit of the Lord, and, from that time on, all her energies and property and family were held in trust for the service of the Lord.

Concerning this as well as minor gifts, the testimony of scripture and Christians is: "*Ask and it shall be given you.*" (Luke 11:9.) When the apostles heard that Samaria had received the word, at the mouth of Philip, they sent unto them Peter and John, who *prayed* for them that they

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might receive the Holy Ghost. Their prayer was answered. (Acts 8: 15-17.) The apostles knew full well that this blessing comes by prayer. At the very time when this promise, "Ye shall receive power," was first fulfilled to them, they were, and had been for ten days, united in *prayer*. (Acts 1: 14.) Peter and John being commanded to preach no more in that "name" *prayed*, and they were all *filled with the Holy Ghost*, and they spake the word of God with boldness. Let us not expect the shaking of the earth, or the rushing mighty wind, or the cloven tongues as of fire—we no longer need such testimony; but let us ask for the Spirit, assured that, as silently as the moonlight steals over the eastern mountain, and noiselessly, it may be, as the sunlight falls upon the face of the earth, the Spirit of power comes into the soul. If we ask, He will give. He has promised. Have we actually prayed? He is willing and able to give; He *knows how*. If we, being evil, *know how* to give good gifts to our children, *how much more* will He give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him. "Oh wondrous power of faithful prayer! what tongue can tell the mighty grace!"

A second condition to be met is

OBEDIENCE.

Spiritual power is obtained by prayer, but it

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must be the prayer of obedience. The testimony of Peter and the other apostles is that the Holy Ghost is given to them that *obey* God. (Acts 5:37.) Here is where so many of us have been skeptical concerning prayer for the power of the Holy Spirit. No doubt many a reader has thought while reading of the importance of prayer for this power, that he has many a time prayed for it, but in vain. Others may have resolved for the first time that they would pray for this promised power. With the first, the lack of obedience was the reason of failure. With the second, obedience will be the secret of success. The element of obedience to the will of God and the laws of the spiritual kingdom is an important—an indispensable—factor in the pursuit of this power. The supreme law of the kingdom is obedience to God. “We ought to *obey* God rather than men” is the motto of the Christian. *Obedience is the royal road to power.*

When Christ said, “Follow Me,” He meant more than the mere physical act of going with Him. To follow Him is to strive to *be* like Him and to *do* as He would do. This the apostle enjoins. “As He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation.” Holiness is necessary to follow Christ. “With-

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out holiness no man shall see the Lord." If a man cannot see the Lord how can he follow Him? To follow Christ is not only to *be* like Him but to *do* as He would do. "My meat," He says, "is to do the will of Him that sent Me." And again, "I do always those things that please Him." Hence to follow Christ is to be Christlike in *character*—"holy" in *conduct*,—"do those things that please Him," in *conversation*—"be holy in all manner of conversation." It is to keep His commandments; to imitate Him in His life of obedience and sacrifice.

This law of sacrifice the Master enjoins upon us, not only by example but by direct teaching. "If any man will come after Me let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me." (Matt. 16:24.) "Follow Me" is a synonym for sacrifice. To Simon and Andrew, James and John, it meant the sacrifice of their business. Levi left an office—a "government position"—in obedience to the voice, "Follow Me." Another young man did not follow Christ because his "great possessions" were too much to be sacrificed. This was a very respectable young man, too. Another well-meaning man fully intended to follow Christ, but his pity and concern for his aged father hindered. He must bury him first. A man with good intentions

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wants first to bid "farewell" to those in his house. But such excuses are not agreeable to the Master.

In these cases it appears that obedience to the voice, "Follow Me," means the sacrifice of business, of "position," of riches, of human sympathy, and of social relations, when these interfere with our Christian duty. "These cases," you say, "apply to *sinner*s yet in the world." Yes, truly so, but equally as well and with a double significance to *saint*s already in the church. When Christ says, "Follow Me," He means to the full extent of obedience—for service as well as salvation.

Why limit the laws of obedience to a half or even to nine-tenths of their meaning? Is Christ pleased with partial obedience? Is He who sacrificed everything for us satisfied with anything less than a self-forgetting, self-sacrificing service? "No man having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." (Luke 9:62.) To obey Christ is to follow Him as did Peter and Andrew and Levi, "straightway" leaving "all." Not even concerning ourselves about the affairs and conduct of others. "What is that to thee?" "Follow thou Me." (Jno. 21:22.) To obey Christ is to follow Him as the sheep follow the "good shepherd." They look to him for food, for protec-

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tion, for guidance. They hear his voice and follow him. They look to him for everything. At his will they live and move. Both the flock and the fleece are at his disposal. This is something of what Christ means by "Follow Me." "Obey Me by submitting your life and service to Me." To obey Him as He obeyed His Father in heaven.

This means *loyalty* to Him and His church; *love* to God and to man; and self-sacrificing *labor* for the interests of the kingdom. That Christian who is at times ashamed of Christ and of His gospel, or who does not love the Lord with all his heart and soul and strength and mind, and his neighbor as himself, and who is not willing to spend and be spent for the sake of the gospel, is in no position or condition to have his prayer for power answered. "If ye abide in Me and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you." (Jno. 15: 7.) The prayer must come from the submissive, Christlike life. "If ye love Me ye will keep My commandments." "I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, even the Spirit of truth. (Jno. 14: 16, 17.) The mere act of prayer without obedience will avail nothing in the search for power. The prayer that avails is that of the righteous man, the man who is right towards God and

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man, and this is the man who abides in Christ and in whom the words of Christ abide.

At times we are willing to submit to God in everything, in order to have His Spirit; but note that it is the *abiding*, the *keeping* of My commandments, that brings us the *abiding* Spirit. To secure His abiding favor we must *always* do the things that please Him. The Spirit is not a servant to come and go at our bidding, to be present with us at the church, and absent from our daily life. He will not come to our rescue for special services, or a series of meetings, if we persist in thinking our own thoughts and walking in our own ways.

To have the Holy Ghost with us during the whole time—God abiding with us—we must lead obedient lives. Of course we are not open, flagrant transgressors of the law; but obedience to God is more than eye-service, or men-pleasers. It means more than obedience to the letter of the law.

The rich young ruler had kept all the commandments from his youth, and was not even in possession of eternal life. There is such a thing as a mere Christian life, but to have power with God, and power with man, there must be also that higher, loving obedience to the spirit and letter of the law as well as to the laws of the Spirit. The man whom God blesses is the one

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whose spirit has no guile. It is the Christian, who in public and private, in worship and work, continually breathes the prayer of submission—"Thy will; not mine."

A life of obedience is one of loyalty, love, and labor. That this promised power for which we all long and pray may be ours, let us see to it, that we are loyal to the Master. Not simply members of the church by *profession*, but members by *faith* and possession. Honestly living up to the known requirements of the Word, and seeking to please God by a life wholly submissive to the will of God, faithfully witnessing for Christ in our daily lives, and compelling men to say, "That one is a follower of the meek and lowly Jesus."

Also let us see to it that love for God and man holds a chief place in our hearts. Putting away from us all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and evil-speaking, with all malice, being kind to one another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven us. (Eph. 4: 31, 32.) No Christian need look for this promised power until he is willing to pray sincerely: "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors." How many churches are idly praying for this power because they are disobeying the law of love! How often Christians stand up and pray, "Pour

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out Thy Spirit," and at the same time they are harboring and cherishing bitterness and wrath and anger? All these centuries the Spirit has been "poured out" and "pouring out," but our hearts are closed and filled with bitterness and wrath and anger and malice. Let us obey the command, "Be filled with the Spirit," and these shall have no place within us.

Even more, let us *labor* for Christ, doing whatever our hands find to do. This is the path of obedience. "I have chosen you and ordained you that ye should go and *bring forth fruit*." "Herein is My Father glorified that ye bear *much fruit*." (John 15: 8, 16.)

Oh, if we could only do away with that prevalent notion that to be a Christian means nothing more than being a member of the church, and keeping within the bounds of the law, being in "good standing;" if we could substitute for that staple question of selfish fear: "Do you think it wrong to do this?" that other question of love and loyalty, "Is this the most becoming and useful thing I can do?"; if we could overcome this life of slavish fear and negative obedience, and be thoroughly convinced that to be a Christian and to be filled with the Spirit of God involves a life of strict obedience to the will of Christ himself, then would our prayers for this power avail much.

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A third condition to obtaining this power is

WAITING.

Scripture instructs us to wait for the baptism of the Spirit of God. As authority, read: "Tarry ye here in Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high." (Luke 24: 49.) "Depart not, but wait for the promise of the Father." (Acts 1: 4.) Until Pentecost was fully come the disciples must wait. God has His time for everything. He could not send His Son into the world until the "fulness of time." "All things are now ready," is the motto of the kingdom. Order, which is another term for "readiness," and the "*fulness of time*," is heaven's first law. Christ does not come to earth until the world is prepared. When He appears, it is under one rule—Rome; one language—Greek; and the philosophy and religion of heathendom are decaying. Then was the fulness of time. Nor is the invitation given to the great gospel feast until all things are "ready." The word, let us make man, is not spoken until the earth is prepared by heat, and moisture, and vegetation. So here in the beginning of the Christian church comes the word, "Depart not from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father." "Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye be endued with power

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from on high." The power from on high could not be given until "Jesus was glorified."

The Spirit is to come as the only witness that the Master has been glorified. His coming is reserved for that very purpose. It has been noted that the "birth of our Savior has been announced by angels, His baptism with a voice from heaven; His miracles were witnessed by thousands, also His death, His burial, His resurrection, and ascension. But when He is received by the cloud, there is no further evidence that He is received and glorified by the Father, except the coming of the Holy Spirit predestined for that purpose." It was necessary for them to wait for the Holy Spirit—the promise of the Father. This Christ Himself had told them. This would convince them that He was indeed the Christ, that He was all He professed to be. They, as well as the world, would be convinced of righteousness.

It was necessary for the disciples to wait until they themselves were ready to glorify and exalt Christ in their hearts; to wait and reflect on their former failures, their doubts and unbelief, their quarrels about the chief places, and their forsaking and denying the Lord. They must wait until convinced that Jesus is indeed the Christ and that He whom the Jews slew and hanged on the tree is exalted by the right hand

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of God. They must wait until they realize the vastness of the work, the difficulties to be met, and their own inability. They must depart not, but wait and tarry here at the city of Jerusalem—the scene of trial and persecution—until the spirit of pride and self-dependence is completely submerged into the sovereign will of their departed Lord, until their uppermost thought shall be, “Without Me ye can do nothing.”

While the command “Go ye” is still ringing in their ears, there comes another equally imperative and pertinent: “Depart not, but wait,” “Tarry ye”—a paradox.

The dangers in Jerusalem seem to be increasing, the enemies of the new religion are becoming more numerous and strong; hate and cruelty are everywhere staring them in the face, but the words, tarry, wait, have been spoken. But their waiting is to end. Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, (not until death), until ye be endued with power from on high, for I send the promise of My Father upon you. This promise came. They did receive power from on high. Jesus was “glorified” and the Holy Spirit was given. The day of Pentecost was fully come. God’s appointed time was at hand, and the Holy Spirit came to “abide forever.” Then their waiting for Him came to an end. And so all these cen-

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turies the Spirit has been in the world and the church; now is the accepted time. When Peter and John prayed for the Samaritans they immediately received the Holy Ghost. (Acts 8:17.) Paul did not wait but was at once filled with the Holy Ghost.

It is the will of God that all who *ask* Him and *obey* Him *shall receive His Spirit*. If we must wait for baptism of the Holy Spirit it is because we are not willing and obedient, we are not fulfilling the required conditions. It is true that he who clings to any known sin, or has not submitted his will to God, and is not willing to be what God wants him to be, and to do what God wants him to do, must wait. Likewise he, too, who does not desire the fulness of the Spirit above everything else, and who does not feel and know his need of more power, must wait. This is God's plan of fitting us for His use. A knowledge of our weakness, of the enemy's strength, and of God's power, is necessary to make ready for the promise of the Father. To be ready for this power is to realize, "Except the Lord do build the house the builders lose their pain, except the Lord the city keep the watchmen watch in vain." But with a sense of our dependence on God, and a willingness to submit to Him in everything we can just *now* receive the promised power.

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The “fulness of the time” for giving His Spirit to the church, as a body, came at Pentecost, and now *God’s time* for the individual and the congregation is *their time*; whenever they are ready He is ready. Are you ready now to begin a life of obedience—ready to live in the spirit of definite prayer for this promise? If so, you need wait no longer, God is more willing to give His Holy Spirit to them that ask Him than earthly parents are to give good gifts to their children. As you wait and pray for the fulness of the Spirit remember that the waiting is only necessary because you are not *fully surrendered* to His will.

Another condition is

EXPECTATION.

The disciples all “continued” with one accord in prayer and supplication. (Acts 1: 14.) They *continued* in prayer, they *expected* to receive the promise. With “one accord” they continued—not one of them doubted. There was no dispute or discussion among them as to whether the promise would be realized. They expected just the thing for which the Master commanded them to wait. They give place to no other interest, no, not for a moment. This is waiting with prayer and expectation. No one would so wait and pray who did not really desire

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and expect the answer. David declares: "I will direct my prayer unto Thee, and *will look up*." He expects the Lord to answer. Or as Matthew Henry puts it for the psalmist: "I will look after my prayers, and hear what God the Lord will speak, that, if He grant what I asked, I may be thankful; if He deny, I may be patient; if He defer I may continue to pray and wait, and may not faint," and as the "lame man looked steadfastly on Peter and John," he observes, "so may we, thus praying and waiting, expect that God will give ear to our words and consider them."

Here is more than expectation; it is hope. Not only do we expect, but we desire, the fulness of the Spirit. We hope for it, and hope that is seen, is not hope, for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. Such is to be the nature of our attitude while in quest of this. We are to hope for it, to *desire* it, to expect it. Many things we expect, which we do not desire. Many things we desire which we do not expect. Full oft is it so in our prayers. The answer would be a surprise to us. When Peter appeared at the gate, those who prayed for him were surprised to see him, and would not believe that it was he.

Yes, pray for the promise of the Father, but pray expectingly. God has promised, and He

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is not a man that He should lie, nor the son of man that He should repent. Desire and expectation are necessary to secure this power, but the desire must conform to the will of God. If your desire is to secure the blessing for purposes agreeable to yourself, God's desire will be to give you the blessing, if at all, for something else. You prefer to have power as a great teacher or evangelist but God wants you for a humble service.

In his excellent book, "Received ye the Holy Ghost?" in answer to the question, "How may I receive Him"? Dr. Chapman says: "One of the most important steps with which I am familiar is this: do not seek to know Him, first of all, that you may teach or preach with power. This is not the way to the blessing. Again, do not seek to know that you may have the peace of which others have spoken, who have known Him in all His fulness. This is not the first step. But rather, bid Him abide in you, that, first of all *He may have power over yourself.*"

The promise is ours. Certainly we have the desire. Let us see that the desire conforms to the will of the Father and we may be assured of the blessing. The Master Himself said: "It is expedient for you that I go away, if I depart I will send Him (the Holy Ghost) unto you. (John 16:7.) Peter said: "The promise is

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unto you and to your children." (Acts 2:39.) The record tells us that Peter and John prayed, and the Holy Ghost came on the Samaritans. Paul came to Ephesus and found certain disciples who received the Holy Ghost at his hands. Why not expect to receive this power—this baptism of the Spirit of God? We know that it is the will of the Father that we should. John says: "This is the confidence we have in Him that if we ask anything according to His will He heareth us, and if we know that He heareth us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him." (Jno. 5:14, 15.) Also we are told: "All things whatsoever ye pray and ask for, believe that ye have received them, and ye shall have them." (Mark 11:24.)

The fact that this promise was received by the early church, and that we have witnessed this power in others in recent years, should lead us to expect the fulness of the Spirit ourselves. We are too prone to think that there are no more Pentecosts. We get reports of revivals through denominational lines, and consequently only a part of the Spirit's work in one community. Were the conditions similar to that of Pentecost, the reports would be different. An eminent evangelist asserts that the gospel has done more wonderful things in recent years than

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it ever did in the days of Pentecost. "A little while ago," he says, "I went into a little town of 20,000 inhabitants, and they stated to me that, seven years before, 2,000 were converted to God at one time. I also know of another instance where in a town with a population of 6,000 there were 1,500 confessed Christ at one time. On one occasion, at a meeting in a small town of 1,200 inhabitants, in New York state, 300 persons rose to their feet and said they would commence the Christian life. A short time ago, in an Indiana town, there were 500 additions to a little church in one day."

"In 1880 the number of communicants in the United States was nine and a quarter millions. In ten years it increased to 13,158,363, a gain of about four millions in ten years, or four hundred thousand in a year. That is to say we had the equivalent of more than one hundred days of Pentecost in each year of the decade. Under John Knox and his brethren, the church of Scotland seemed to be born anew by the Holy Spirit. It is reported that the whole general assembly of about four hundred ministers and elders, while renewing their solemn league and covenant, were swayed by the Spirit as a mighty rushing wind. In 1630, under the teaching of Bruce and Livingston, nearly 500 souls were converted in one day.

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Livingston says that he has seen more than a thousand persons all at once, lifting up their hands, and the tears falling from their eyes." (Rev. T. A. Horton in S. S. World.)

Let us expect great things of God. Why long for the days of old? "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you," was not spoken of a single day. For, as has been verified, the promise is unto you and your children, and to all that are afar off, even to as many as the Lord our God shall call. Have you prayed for the Spirit of God and failed to receive, then pray and *expect* the answer. God means us to have this fulness of the Spirit just as truly as He means us not to be drunken with wine. "Be not drunken with wine, but be ye filled with the Spirit." (Eph. 5: 18.) He means it or He would not command it. And why should we not *expect* it in our case? Not only does He command it but He assures us that: "He that believeth on Me, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." This He spake of the Spirit which they that believe on Him shall receive.

Once more, how get this power?

RECEIVE IT.

We have learned that this power is promised, and that a prayerful, obedient, expecting life is

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necessary to the securing of it. But there is still another important step—simply *receive*. That is what our text says: “Ye shall receive.” (Acts 1:8.) In fact, we are commanded to *receive*. When our Lord commissioned His disciples, saying: “As My Father sent Me, even so I send you,” He breathed on them and said: “Receive (or take) ye the Holy Ghost.” (Jno. 20:22.) Not buy the Holy Ghost, as poor Simon assayed to do; not get, but—*receive*. We need not say in the heart: “Who shall ascend up to heaven, or who shall descend into the deep?” No, there is no need of that, but receive the Holy Ghost, the promise of the Father, which, Christ, being exalted and being received, hath shed forth;—only *receive*. The word receive in itself implies a gift—something to be given, and to be taken. This accords with the word of Peter and the other apostles to the High Priest: “And so also is the Holy Ghost whom God *hath given* to them that obey Him.” (Acts 5:32.) The Spirit is a gift. A gift is to be received. ✓

There is no contradiction here to the necessity of paying the price of obedience and prayer, of diligently using the means of power already possessed. The presidency of the United States is a gift, yet the one who receives it does so at the expense of a great deal of anxiety and pre-

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paration. The reason we do not receive the power of the Spirit in a greater degree is that we fail to prepare for the Spirit. God cannot use us as we are, nor can we receive this special power until, by the use of provided and known means, preparation is made for the reception and use of promised power.

In the early days of the gas wells in the southwestern part of Pennsylvania many wells were sending forth great volumes of gas, furnishing an abundance of power and light, but to no purpose, for there had been no preparation for it. The necessary and known pipes had not been laid, nor were the proper appliances prepared. So also, when the three kings were distressed for want of water, and asked the intercession of Elisha, the word of the Lord was: "Make the valley full of ditches." The Lord would provide the water, but the armies must dig the ditches. And when this was done there was no wind, they saw no rain, but the valley was full of water. So, too, when we provide the proper attitude, God will send the Spirit. No congregation, no Christian, can expect the times of refreshing to visit them unless the prescribed requirements are met. The ditches must be made. The widow must provide the vessels, and not a few. As the valley was filled with water, so the vessels with oil. Prayer, obedience, love, Bible study,

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spiritual mindedness, and liberality are some of the necessary ditches the church must make. The continuing of one accord, the being of one mind and one heart, are necessary. The one hundred twenty, not seventy-five of them, but all, were in the upper room.

How many members in every congregation there are who never, or rarely ever, meet with the rest to pray for the special manifestation of the Spirit! What a hindrance they are to the church! It was not a meaningless act when the army of Gideon was thinned out by sending home, first the cowards, and then those who were so indifferent, or so self-indulgent that they must get down on their hands and knees and drink to their satisfaction, regardless of the welfare of their country.

There are so many church-members to-day afraid to work, and so many lovers of physical ease and pleasure, that it is impossible to get them all to meet and pray for the power of the Spirit. The most appropriate name for many of them would be "Thomas,"—"the absent." They are at home asleep, or away visiting, or off up the miff-tree sulking because things have not turned out as they expected. And when the rest have actually "seen the Lord," and heard the blessed word, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost," these Thomases then come around with their

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cold and unbelieving hearts, to suggest doubts, and toss cold water on the zeal of the others. The "All in one place," and the "All of one accord," are important features in a congregation expecting to receive power. To receive this power there must be union of heart and effort.

These are some of the necessary means and conditions on which spiritual power is received. We can neither buy nor earn, and we must neither hinder nor resist, the Holy Spirit; but *receive*, as vessels do the God-given rain. It is our privilege, and our duty. Says one: "What Christ gives we must receive. We must submit ourselves and our whole souls to the quickening, sanctifying influence of the blessed Spirit, receive His motions and comply with them, receive His powers and make use of them; and those who shall obey the word as a precept, shall have the benefit of it as a promise." To us all, He says: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." The apostle says: "Be filled with the spirit."

Mr. Andrew Murray points out the truth—"We must." To us all, he says, God commands: "Be filled"; we may; God promiseth: "He that believeth on Me, out of his belly shall flow rivers of water." Are we willing to *obey* God and *receive*? Are we willing also to *receive* and *obey* God? Or, as one put it so simply, "Are we willing to be made willing?" Do you

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now actually desire this spiritual power, or are you content with water baptism? Who is not willing to pay the price of this baptism of the Spirit? Is the price too high? "There is a famous French maxim," says one, "which tells us that 'It is the first step that costs.' It is a pity," he says, "that the proverb does not finish the thought," and adds, "It is the last step that pays." It costs much to be a Christian, but it pays most to be a spiritual Christian, full of power by the Spirit of the Lord. It costs prayer and obedience. Every weight must be laid aside. Sins must be given up. Secret faults, forsaken as well as confessed, and wordly habits and inordinate affection must be strangled. ✓

Are we not willing to exalt Jesus and subdue self, to *pray* to God for the Spirit, to *obey* His will and *expectantly* look forward to the promise of the Father? It is the power we need in our lives and in our work. And what a transformation would come, how we would like to pray then, with what joy we could sing, and how cheerfully we could do God's will! Without this power of the Spirit, the service of the Master is hard; but with it, a pleasure.

These two modes of life have been compared. The first, to a boat rowed with great toil against a wind and tide; the other, to the same boat sweeping over the waves, with sails filled with a

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favoring wind. The first is compared to an effort to remove the snow and ice of winter with shovels and dynamite; the latter to their removal with the warm breath of spring. And as to the difficult experience of caring for house plants in an unfavorable exposure, by constant care, by destroying the insects, by picking off the dead leaves, something can be done. But what gives them health and blood is fresh air and plenty of sunshine pouring new life into them. “ ’Tis life of which our nerves are scant. More life, and fuller that we want.” Oh for more of this life of Jesus—this Spirit power! These temptations of the world, these lusts and evil habits of every young life, are thieves and robbers and come but for to steal and to kill and to destroy. But Christ came that we might have life, and have it more abundantly. This abundant life, this power=life and life=power, we shall receive after the Holy Ghost has come upon us.

PART II.

Power and Precept

OR

Fundamental Conditions to Spiritual Power.

VI.

POWER AND FAITH.

"Repent ye and believe the gospel."—MARK i: 15.

The closing chapter on "Power and Promise" emphasizes the fact that the possession of power is not optional with the Christian. The Master says: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." The command is: "Be filled with the Spirit."

Nor does the precept end with believers; it extends to all men. "Repent ye and believe the gospel" is spoken to the public. In this brief text we find two precepts—commandments, "exceeding broad"—basal conditions that reach beyond the followers of Christ to all men. All Christians are commanded, and are therefore under obligation, to be "filled with the Spirit;" so all men are commanded, and are in like manner obligated, to become Christians. The obligation rests on all alike. Christians acknowledge it; others do not. Yet the precept stands, "Repent and believe the gospel."

Here are two fundamental conditions to the possession of spiritual power: (1) Faith, the gateway into the realm of power; (2) Repent-

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ance, the act of entrance. Of the spiritual life these two lie at the foundation. Of these, faith is the first. This is inverting the order of our text, but it accords with the teaching of Scripture and reason to say that when our Lord uttered the precept, "Repent," He at once led His hearers to the one essential to repentance, and added, "and believe the gospel." It is so with the apostle when he says: "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus," he immediately adds, "and believe in thy heart." It is reasonable that a man will not forsake or turn away from sin unless he believes in something better and trusts one to whom he can turn. Repentance is the great need of men to turn them into the kingdom, but "believe in the gospel" is the means to that end.

As to time, the means and end are together. As to order of thought, the belief precedes. Where one is, the other is, and when one is, the other is; but there *must be* "belief in the gospel" that there *may be* repentance toward God. This "belief in the gospel" is faith in Jesus Christ. This can best be expressed in the words of another: "The French king arrogantly said, 'I am the state.' In simple truth, Christ is the gospel."

With these preliminary remarks we now pro-

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ceed with the discussion of these fundamental conditions to spiritual power, viz., faith and repentance. First we consider faith as to its *nature*, its *necessity*, and its *note* or *sign*. These points find their best explanation in our Lord's own words: "He that believeth on Me out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." (Jno. 7:38.)

This is figurative speech; but the interpretation appears in the next verse: "But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive." Water is frequently used to represent the operations of the Spirit. In the very promise of the Spirit, the figure is used of "pouring water upon the thirsty" and "floods upon the dry ground." (Isa. 44:3.) Again, the promise is: "I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh." While in the text before us the effects of the Spirit are represented as "rivers of living water."

To receive this blessing of the Spirit, this New Testament promise, there is one requirement necessary above all others: it is faith in Jesus Christ. "He that believeth on Me out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." We were redeemed by Him, not only to receive salvation through faith in Him, but also to receive the promise of the Spirit. "Christ hath

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redeemed us from the curse of the law, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." (Gal. 3:13, 14.)

Before speaking further of the necessity of faith, let us see something of its *nature*. The Master says, "He that *believeth* on Me." Faith is belief; belief is accepting as true the record that we have of Christ. We accept the testimony of men and events as given by our fellow men, and the apostle says: "If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater." "He that believeth not God, hath made Him a liar; because he believed not the record that God gave of His Son. And this is the record that God hath given to us, eternal life, and this life is in His Son." "He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life." The record is that God hath given to us eternal life and that life is in the Son. Accepting this record is believing on Christ. It is not only believing that God is, and that He is a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth; but believing that Jesus Christ also is; that He is the Son of God; that He is the eternal Son of God; that in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the same was in the beginning with God; that "All things were made by Him

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and apart from Him was not anything made that was made"; and believing that "the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us." Believing, too, that "Jesus Christ took not on Him the nature of angels but took on Him the seed of Abraham." (Heb. 2:16.)

It is believing Jesus to be the Christ, the Messiah. This the Hebrews refused to believe. This the Ethiopian did believe. And Cornelius, although a devout man, must yet be convinced that Jesus of Nazareth is the Son of God—the promised Messiah, for whom he looked. It "is believing on Me" as He that should come, and looking not for another; believing that "He came to seek and to save that which was lost;" that "He was wounded for our transgressions;" that "He was bruised for our iniquities"; that He "died for us"; that, on the third day, He arose from the dead, ascended into heaven, and that He is now at God's right hand making continual intercession for us.

Faith in Jesus Christ, therefore, is accepting, not a part or parts of the record, but all of it. It is more. It is looking unto Him, not only as the author but as the finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame and is set down at the right hand of God. He who has

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faith in Jesus Christ is he who "believeth" on Him as to His history, His promises, His precepts and His prohibitions.

If we have faith in Christ, we believe on Him so as to pray to Him, obey Him, and expect to receive from Him whatever He has promised. We will abide in Him, and His words will abide in us. We will receive Him, and rest upon Him alone for salvation, but not for salvation only. He that believeth on Christ abides in Him, and His words abide in the believer. He appropriates the life and power and wisdom of Christ to himself. He not only "comes" but he "drinks." Faith is more than a mere belief; there is a *saving* faith, a "receiving and resting upon" Christ alone for salvation. Faith is more than a saving faith; it also includes service, a coming to Him and a drinking in His life so that His promises, His precepts and prohibitions, are yea and amen. So that His life is our life; His work is our work. He came not only that we should have life but that we should have "life more abundantly."

When the Master uttered, "He that believeth on Me," He meant more than a mere consent to His history. When He said, "If any man thirst let him come unto Me and drink," did He mean that He would provide literal water to quench the thirst of the physical body? No.

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Neither did He mean that when He talked to the woman at the well, saying: "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst." Why does He say "come unto Me"? Was He not surrounded by the multitude? Had not many of these been, during the throng, touching clothes with Him? Does He mean for all the multitude to come close and touch Him or take hold of even the "hem of His garment"? There is a deeper meaning in "come and drink" than this.

To come to Christ is not to approach His body. Judas came to Him when he delivered that deceitful kiss. The high priests came to Jesus when they arrested Him. Yes, Judas came to Him and drank, but not in the sense here meant. "If any man thirst,"—if any man longs for pardon from sin, for peace of conscience, if your words are those of the Psalmist, "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God; My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God"; then He means to come in *submission*, yielding your wills to His will, presenting your body a "living sacrifice," obeying the call, "Son, give Me thine heart."

This is the kind of coming Christ means. In the spirit, too, of him who said: "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head." We admire the whole-heartedness of Peter. He is

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anxious not only that the feet, representing the course of life, but the hands, representing the activities of life, and the head, representing the intellectual faculties, also shall have a part in the service of the Master. He means to come in the *sincerity* of her who wished only to "touch the hem of the garment," and in humility of the other who desired only the "crumbs from her Master's table." Come with your body, with your heart, with your soul, with your mind.

In this spirit of submission we are ready to drink in the blessings He has in store for us, to receive whatever He has to give us. And as the greatest and best gift that the Father had for us was His Son, so the Holy Spirit is the great promise of the New Testament and the chief gift of Christ to all who come unto Him. To come and drink, in this sense, is to believe, is to have faith in Christ. It is submitting all to Him, accepting all He offers, doing whatever He requires, and leaving undone whatever He forbids. It is coming to Him for whatever our souls desire. It is to delight in Him and commit the life to His care. So the inspired poet sings:

" *Delight* thyself in God; He'll give
Thy heart's desire to thee,
Thy way to God *commit*, Him *trust*,
It bring to pass shall He."

Three exercises of the soul here, *trust, delight,*

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commit. These are elements of true faith. Implicit trust begets pure delight which leads to a committal of the entire life. The spirit of this psalm has found expression in verse:

“Trust Him when dark doubts assail thee,
Trust Him when thy faith is small,
Trust Him when simply to trust Him
Seems the hardest thing of all.
Trust Him for His will is the best,
Trust Him for the heart of Jesus is the only place
to rest,
All thy cares upon Him cast;
Trust Him till the storm of life is over,
Trust Him till the trusting days are past.”

He that believes on Christ delights in Him and confidingly turns the life over to Him. Are we hungry? He is meat indeed. Are we thirsty? He is drink. Are we weary? He is rest. Are we weak? He is strength. Faith in Christ is “taking Him for all things.” And reverently we may add, taking all things for Christ.

This is the kind of faith that He expects. “All things are possible to him that believeth.” “If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed ye might say unto this sycamine tree, be thou plucked up by the root, and it should obey you, or to this mountain, remove hence to yonder place, and it shall remove.” In the one case the disciples have failed to heal the lunatic who, according to the testimony of the father, was so from a child. To do this would seem as

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difficult as to remove a mountain. In the other case the disciples despaired at the thought of ever attaining the high degree of life—the forgiving spirit—of which the Master had just been speaking, which, indeed, might seem possible, but as difficult as to uproot the sycamine tree. Yet they are assured of success in both cases, if their faith be as a grain of mustard seed.

Is there not here the lesson of faith's *power* to accomplish things the most difficult as well as things otherwise impossible? Whether they be within us as the unforgiving spirit was within those disciples, or a work of necessity, or mercy, as the healing of the lunatic, mustard-seed faith renders all things possible.

Not the least bit of faith, as is often thought, says one, but a living, hardy, faith; a faith that is Christ in grain just as the mustard seed is the “great tree” in grain; a faith that adapts itself to its surroundings and appropriates them to its own development and strength just as the mustard seed adapts itself to the soil, moisture, and heat, whether in the garden or in the commons; faith as a “grain of mustard seed” small and insignificant in itself but the sum-total of divine power and dignity and beneficence as the mustard seed is the germ of the “great tree” into whose branches the fowls of heaven may gather and shelter; and a faith which, like the

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mustard seed, does its work without show or noise. This is the faith that "worketh by love." The faith that is neither barren nor unfruitful. "He that believeth on Me, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water."

Having considered the nature of faith let us now inquire as to its *necessity* in receiving spiritual power. Why is belief in Jesus Christ indispensable in order to enter the kingdom of power? "He that *believeth on Me*, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." *Apart*, or *severed* from *Me* ye can do nothing. "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth" is the testimony of our Lord. Hence *apart*, or *severed* from Him we can do nothing. In the Juniata Shops of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company is found an immense hydraulic engine. It is in a separate building, and, to the observer, there is no visible connection between it and the many machines in the adjoining shops. Yet each machine has connection with it by a hidden pipe through which the power from that huge engine is conveyed, and by which these machines can receive power to their utmost capacity. But sever this connection and they become powerless. Apart from the source of power they can do nothing. So since *all* power is given unto Christ it is evident that apart from Him we can do nothing.

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It is necessary to be in touch with Him, because by His Spirit only can we receive power. He sends the Holy Ghost from the Father. The only way of communication between us and the Father is Christ. "I am the way." As we have observed, "Jesus Christ is the way to all the blessings of grace. He is the way to pardon, to peace, to holiness. He is a new way, a perpetual way, an open way, a plain way, a holy way, an exclusive way." He is not only the way, but the *door* to the way. "I am the door, by Me if any man enter in he shall be saved and shall go in and out and find pasture." This opens up the door and the way to the soul-food of the Christian." "He shall find *pasture*"—that which sustains life and gives power for service.

There is no access to God and to the "good things" of His spiritual treasury except through Christ, and that by *faith* in Him. Many of the mercies of God are bestowed upon all alike. "He does cause the sun to rise on the good and evil. He sends rain on the unjust as on the just." But with spiritual blessings it is not so. Here a distinction is made—a distinction based on faith alone. Only by this means can the soul—the spiritual man—find satisfaction for its longings, its hungerings, and its thirstings. If any man thirsts, let him *come to Me and drink*.

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"*By Me* if any man enter in he shall find pasture." "He that spared not His own Son but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not *with Him* freely give us *all things*." To receive the things of God we must receive the Son. Only by *faith* can we receive Him. And to receive any or all good things, faith in Jesus Christ is absolutely indispensable.

Chief among the "all things" promised with the Son is the Holy Spirit. As has already been noted, one chief object in redeeming us is to give us the Holy Spirit. The apostle says, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." The object to be attained is the promise of the Spirit, and this comes through faith. The plan of redemption itself teaches us that without faith in Jesus Christ the Holy Spirit cannot be possessed by man. Our salvation originated with the Father. "God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son." Its execution was accomplished by the Son who in response to the love of the Father, said: "Lo I come." He did come. He died on the cross. He satisfied the justice of God. He rose, ascended, and made good the promise of the Father in sending the Holy Ghost. Him He sends to us, not alone to convince us of sin but to fit us for heaven; not

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alone to deliver us from the service of Satan, but to qualify us for serving in turn Him who died for us. Hence the Holy Spirit comes to us as the gift of the Son and of the Father.

Since the Son is not only the "way," but the "door" of the way to the Father, and is Himself equal with the Father in sending the Spirit, the necessity of faith in Him is evident. It is said (Acts 11:24) that Barnabas was "full of the Holy Ghost," but to account for this fact it is added immediately, "and of faith." Unless full of faith he could not be full of the Holy Ghost. Faith here explains the term "full of the Holy Ghost." Faith unlocks the "door" and points out the "way" through and by which the Father sends the Spirit.

The nature of faith in Christ shows another reason for its necessity. It draws and binds its possessor to God and necessarily separates him from everything else. It has a separating as well as a connecting power. The former is no less essential than the latter in securing the "promise of the Father." Connection with the world and separation from God is weakness; but separation from the world and connection with God by faith in His Son is strength. Stephen was full of power because he was full of faith. He did "great wonders" because he was

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“full of faith and power.” The disciples were weak and had not power to heal the lunatic because of their “unbelief.” The remedy for this weakness our Lord prescribes, namely, prayer and fasting. The former, as Mr. Murray has said, signifies *connection* with God; the latter, *separation* from the world.

A life of faith is necessarily a life of separation. The life of Abraham, the “father of all them that believe,” is marked by the principle of separation. He is called out from Ur of the Chaldees. He must bury his father in Haran. In Canaan, the land given to him, he only “*pitched* his tent”; but he also built an altar. The tent—his earthly tie—was temporary. The altar—his faith connection—was permanently set. Soon he is called upon to give up his son Isaac, then Sarah his wife. Hence he “gave all he had to Isaac.”

The chosen people of God, the children of faith, furnish a similar example of separation. Neither in politics, religion nor matrimony can they join with the other nations. The Canaanite must be driven from the land. So separation is the principle of distinction in the Christian church. That the followers of Christ “receive not the grace of God in vain” the apostle sounds the note of separation: “Be ye not unequally

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yoked together with unbelievers, come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch no unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be to you a Father, and ye shall be to Me sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. Having therefore these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." (2 Cor. 6: 14—7: 1.) The principle that separates the life from the world and its sin is faith in Jesus Christ. Faith is essential to separation, and separation is necessary in order to secure spiritual power.

There must be that faith, too, that *exalts* the name of Jesus above every name. The Spirit could not be sent into the world until the Father had glorified Jesus. Nor can the Spirit enter our hearts as an abiding power until we exalt Jesus Christ by bowing to Him, by believing on Him, by bringing our all to Him, and receiving whatever He has for us. That Christian or company of Christians that willingly or ignorantly exalts business, or pleasure, or comfort, or "numbers," or "organization," or "wealth," or "education," or "reputation" above Christ need not expect to receive any special power. Jesus must be glorified in our hearts above everything else. By faith He must be exalted; by faith we must

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bow down to Him with the feeling of the psalmist:

“O, Lord, thou art my God and king;
I'll Thee exalt Thy praise proclaim;
I will Thee bless and gladly sing
Forever to Thy holy name.”

Such faith alone is the medium of spiritual power. It is the instrument of appropriation. It is the trolley by which the current is conveyed from the true source of all power.

Passing now from the nature and necessity of faith in Christ, let us next consider this faith as to its *note* or *sign*. This will stand the same test as a tree. It is marked by its fruit. “He that believeth on Me, *out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.*” “This spake He of the Spirit which they who believe on Him should receive.” “Out of his belly” or “out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water.” “Out of his heart are the issues of life,” and out of the heart of him that believeth shall flow copious streams of righteousness.

In the heart and soul of man, the Spirit has His abode on earth. The result is that the “issues” of the heart are as abundant as rivers of water. They revive and refresh and purify the surrounding world. They are constant as rivers, not intermittent, as is the famous Flowing Spring of Central Pennsylvania, one hour

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filling its channel, and the next disappearing. Like rivers they cannot be obstructed; they will find a channel somewhere. Paul is in prison, but he writes letters. Luther is in the lonely castle of confinement, but his countrymen receive therefrom a copy of the word in their mother tongue. Bunyan is in the damp dungeon at Bedford, but "Pilgrim's Progress" flows out to the world. "He that believeth on Me," in the true sense, is so full of the Spirit that his every-day life is a benediction. It is to his community what a living, flowing river is to the surrounding country—in itself refreshing and purifying, and upon its breast are borne into his community heaven's richest blessings.

Abounding wealth shall bless his home,
His righteousness shall still endure;
To him shall light arise in gloom;
He's kind, compassionate and pure.

The good will favor show and lend,
And his affairs discreetly guide;
Unmoved He stands till life shall end,
His name and honor shall abide.

He is good and He cannot help but do good. His doing good is not a drudgery. Some one has said: "He scarce giveth once that giveth slackly; he rather in truth suffers a good turn to be drawn from him than doeth one. Living springs send out streams of water; dead pits must have all they afford drawn out in buckets."

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What a contrast between the natural heart and that into which the Holy Spirit has entered by faith in Jesus Christ! The wise man, in showing the vanity of human courses, says: "All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full." And it is the experience of all men that the rivers of pleasure, of avarice and ambition, and of all merely human desires, flowing into the natural heart, do not satisfy. Still the heart "is not full." But out of the heart of him that believeth on Christ, the heart that is full of the Spirit, shall flow streams of righteousness, virtue, love, joy and peace and yet the sea is not "empty." "Out of the good treasure of the heart he bringeth forth good things." "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh not evil, but good."

From a "Spirit-filled" heart flows a life of Spirit-directed *action*. The hands with all their might do whatsoever they find to do. Not a noisy, boisterous display; not the fussy, busy-body style content only with being queen of the May, on rally days; not the busy, here and there, everywhere seen, nowhere desired life, aptly styled "industrious idleness"; not this, but that rare flow of thoughtful, prudent, faithful effort that makes for peace and righteousness.

Plutarch tells of two men who were hired at Athens for some public work; the one was full

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of tongue but slow at hand, the other was blank in speech but an excellent workman. Being called upon by the magistrates to express themselves and declare at large how they would proceed, when the first had made a long speech and explained the work from point to point, the other seconded him in a few words, saying: "Ye men of Athens, what this man has said to you in words, I will make good to you in true performances." As by this man's work he showed himself to be the better artisan, so by efficient effort is shown the Spirit's power in the life.

Of Spirit-filled Christians it is especially true: "We live in deeds, not years; in thoughts, not breaths; in feelings, not in figures on a dial"; not words, but deeds; not profession, but character; not leaves, but fruit. To "confess with the mouth" is a sign of faith in "the heart," but the true evidences of "believeth on Me" are the "rivers of water"—the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.

All the blessings in the world and the church have flown from God by faith in Jesus Christ. Like rivers of water in the dry, sultry days of autumn, they have come imparting life and vigor, joy and comfort. They have brought bread for the hungry, clothes for the naked, rest for the weary. Whence came these homes for

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the fatherless and the poor? These asylums for the blind and helpless? These social and religious reforms? Out of the world? No. Of the natural man? No, out of his heart flow the rivers of worldly pleasure, avarice, ambition; but all that tends for mercy, comfort, love, joy and peace comes from the heart, from the church, filled with power by the Spirit of the Lord, and that through faith in Jesus Christ.

One has fittingly expressed it thus: "From this union have sprung up a glorious progeny." "All the mighty deeds which have ennobled and elevated humanity own that parentage. Faith and action have been the source, under God, of everything good and great and enduring in the church of Christ, the very church itself exists through them. Its model men were men of faith and action. Such have ever been God's true evangelists. Such was Luther, the flaming iconoclast of Europe—to-day writing theses and to-morrow translating the Scriptures or hurling fresh invective against the domination of the man of sin. Such were Baxter, the indefatigable pastor; Edwards, the perpetual thinker; Neander, the perpetual student; Owen the untiring preacher, writer, thinker, and reformer, all in one."

And hear the great apostle: "What shall I more say? The time would fail me to tell of

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Gideon, of Barak, of Samson, and of Jephtha, and of David also, and of Samuel, and of the prophets; who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of aliens." (Heb. 11:32-34.) Faith in Jesus Christ is the medium of all spiritual power for the individual or the church. Do we desire more power to be and to do what the Christ Master would have us be and do? Then let our continual prayer be, "Lord increase our faith."

VII.

POWER AND REPENTANCE.

"Repent ye and believe the gospel."—MARK i: 15.

Faith, the first fundamental condition to spiritual power having been considered, we now consider repentance as the second. As to this, consider also its nature, necessity, and sign.

As to *nature* of repentance, it is extensive and intensive in range, and Godward and manward in execution. In regard to extent, the word repentance has a general, and a specific sense. The general is synonymous with the term salvation, and signifies the entire change from a *sinner* in the "horrible pit" to a saint in the heavenly paradise. The specific sense, or repentance proper, indicates the immediate act, or change of heart and will, which frees the sinner from the claim of Satan and gives him a title to glory.

Both the specific and intensive nature of repentance as well as the Godward and manward sides appear in the words of the prophet: "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the

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Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon." (Isa. 55: 7.) The *specific* nature consists in the simple act of "forsaking" and "turning"; the intensive, in the fact that this repentance is internal, as well as external. "Forsake his way" is the external repentance, the outward conversion, the turning away of the wicked from the open crimes, and immoralities, and sins of the body and flesh, visible to the eyes of all. The "unrighteous man his thoughts"—this reaches the inward man. The heart and mind must repent. The penitent must part company with sins of the mind as well as of the body. The outward conduct and the inward condition undergo a complete change. The manward side of repentance appears in the first part of this text: "The wicked *forsake* his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and *return* unto the Lord." The Godward, is set forth in second part: "And He *will have mercy* upon him and, *will abundantly pardon*."

Looking Godward we see in the commission given to Paul, repentance both in the general and specific sense. "I send thee to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among them that are sanctified by

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faith that is in Me.” (Acts 26:18.) Here is the fundamental principle in repentance—“faith that is in Me”; the two antecedent elements: (1) conviction—“to open their eyes”; (2) enlightenment—“to turn them from darkness unto light”; the act itself, or repentance proper—“from the power of Satan unto God.” Here also are three consequent elements: justification—“that they may receive the forgiveness of sins”; adoption—“an inheritance”; and sanctification, or a fitness for that inheritance, “among them that are sanctified.” In the light of this text, God is the author and agent of repentance; but looking at the human side it appears that man has an active part. The sinner is commanded: “Repent and believe the gospel.” “Repent and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.” (Acts 3:19.) “Repent and be baptized, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” (Acts 2:38.)

The human side is presented in the general sense by a catechism answer familiar to many: “Repentance unto life is a saving grace whereby a sinner out of a true sense of his sin and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ doth with grief and hatred of his sin turn from it unto God, with full purpose of, and endeavor

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after, new obedience.” Here repentance is described as a “saving grace,” it is a gift from God with the salvation of the sinner in view as the end. It is a saving grace whereby a sinner has “*a true sense of his sin.*” Here is the effect when God opens the eyes: The sinner has a *true sense of his sin,—conviction.* He sees sin as it is. He sees the sinfulness of sin, and its heinousness in the sight of God. And, “out of a true sense of his sin, *and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ,*” he turns from darkness unto light. He sees the mercy of God as it is exhibited in the life and sufferings and death of Christ. He is *enlightened* both as to the heinousness of his sin and the richness of God’s mercy. And with a true sense of sin and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ doth *with grief and hatred of his sin* turn from it,—here is *contrition.* The sinner is convinced that he has sin and sees the real nature of his sin. He also sees the mercy of God in Christ, and, contrasting these, he is filled with grief and hatred of that sin, which caused the suffering and death of Christ, and *turns from it unto God.* This is repentance in the proper, or specific, sense. It is *conversion.* It is man putting into action the power conferred by the “saving grace” and the “faith that is in Me”—the power conferred by the Spirit of God in the regenerating work

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which "opened his eyes" and "turned him from darkness unto light." It is repentance in the strict sense. Before, his back was toward God; now, he faces God. It is said that out of a true sense of sin and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, he doth, with grief and hatred of his sin, turn from it unto God, with "*full purpose of, and endeavor after, new obedience.*" Here is *consecration* in the standard coin—"full purpose of, and endeavor after, new obedience."

The story of the prodigal applies here as an illustration of repentance in its Godward and manward sides, in the general and specific sense, both externally and internally. In fact this story is the "sample copy" of the true penitent. To verify this it is only necessary to note the various steps in the return of the prodigal and in the reception given by the father.

When he came to himself, or in the above language of Acts 26:18 and that catechism, we may read, when his "eyes were opened" and he had a "true sense of his sin." This is *conviction*. It is a sense of his true condition and a "true sense" of his condition. *How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare and I perish with hunger!* What is this but enlightenment, of which we spoke above? He is "turned from darkness into light"; he thinks of the abundance of the home,

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of the kindness of the father, of the luxury of the hired servants; and all this he contrasts with his own poverty. This is "apprehending the mercy of God in Christ." Then he *arose and came to his father—conversion—the act of repentance—the "turning from sin unto God,"* which is repentance in the strict sense. *Father I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight.* Here is *confession*, a new element, something we did not have expressed in the samples mentioned above. *And am no more worthy to be called thy son.* This is *contrition*. It is "grief and hatred of his sin." *Make me as one of thy hired servants.* Here again is *consecration*. It is the "full purpose of, and endeavor after, new obedience." When in the home before he was a son; now he is willing to be a servant, to do any service, however humble, and whenever bidden.

Noting the actions of the father in receiving the son we see the Godward side, after a sinner has been brought to repentance. But "when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him, and said to his servants: "Bring forth the best robe and put it on him." Here is forgiveness, pardon, *justification*. The robe—the "best robe"—is put on him. So Christ clothes the penitent with the robe of His righteousness.

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By this robe alone can the rags and shame of the sinner be covered. How the conduct of this father accords with the words of the prophet: "Let him return unto the Lord and He *will have mercy* upon him, and to our God and He *will abundantly pardon*." So abundant is the pardon of the Lord that it not only sees the penitent a great way off, but runs to meet him. *Put a ring on his hand*, is a token of forgiveness and a seal of his right and possession in the home of the father. Nothing less than the "inheritance" referred to above—*adoption*. *Shoes on his feet*—a fitness for the inheritance—*sanctification*. He is not to be a "hired servant" as was his request, but a son, on an equality with the family of the father. *Bring hither the fatted calf and kill it; and let us eat and be merry*. This is a feast. It is *communion* with the father and his family. So the Lord says: "I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me." (Rev. 3:20.)

When the Lord says, "Repent," His commandment is "exceeding broad." It embraces conviction, contrition, conversion, confession, consecration, communion. It implies justification, adoption, and sanctification, with all they mean.

In this brief survey of repentance, as to its nature, we see that it begins with *conviction*—"To open their eyes," and ends with *communion*

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—"Let us eat and be merry," the evidence and reality indeed of abundant pardon. God is at both ends. But there is ample room between these two extremes for the sinner to exercise fully his heart and will and faculties in acting, by seeing and hating, by turning and confessing and communing.

With this view of its nature it seems useless to discuss *necessity* of repentance in order to secure the power of the Holy Spirit. The *unsatisfying* and *ruinous* nature of sin itself makes it necessary to repent. Because of his extreme want, the prodigal was compelled to arise and go to his father. It was his famishing condition that brought him to himself. This wayward son could stand it no longer. He had gone far enough to learn that the "wages of sin is death." The only remedy was to forsake the service of sin and go to the father.

The *evil of sin* in itself renders it necessary to repent. There is no promise of "mercy" or "abundant pardon" until the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts. It is "his way" and "his thoughts" that must be forsaken. "His way" is not the Lord's way. "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways saith the Lord." "The ways of the Lord are right" and, of course, the sinner's way is wrong. It is the

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way of the wicked, and "the way of the wicked is an abomination unto the Lord." It is so with "his thoughts." "The thoughts of the wicked are an abomination to the Lord." "The carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin," whether in the "way"—sins of the body; or in the "thoughts"—sins of the mind; and they must be forsaken. Let no one console himself with the notion that "his thoughts" are not wicked. "My thoughts are not your thoughts." How easily we excuse ourselves and friends with the remark, "It's just my way," or, "It's just his way." Of course that is true, but it is not God's way. "Neither are your ways My ways." "Some sins in themselves, and by reason of several aggravations, are more heinous in the sight of God than others." But, "Every sin deserves God's wrath and curse, both in this life and that which is to come"; and that which deserves "wrath and curse" can be avoided only by repentance. "Let him *return unto the Lord*, and He will have mercy upon him, and to our God, and He will abundantly pardon."

It is necessary to repent to *escape* the *power* and *dominion* as well as the *penalty* of sin. The eyes of the Gentiles were opened to "turn them from darkness unto light, and from the power

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of Satan unto God." Satan's power consists in darkness. "The way of the wicked is darkness." Concerning those who had repented the apostle says: "This I say and testify in the Lord that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart." The mission of Christ on the earth was to "destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil," and to deliver us "from the power of darkness."

The direct *commandment* of the Lord is sufficient reason for repentance. "Repent and believe the gospel" renders it just as necessary to repent as to believe the gospel. No sooner had the gospel message been announced than comes the command: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." The prophet Isaiah specifies the action involved: "Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before Mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well." The command of the Lord by the psalmist is: "Thy lips refrain from speaking guile, and from ill words thy tongue. Depart from ill, do good, seek peace, pursue it earnestly. God's eyes are on the just, His ears are open to their cry."

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From the foregoing it appears evident that to secure the *favor* of God or to *serve* Him it is necessary to repent. The man who desires life, and desires to see good, and who would live long, *must* “*depart from ill.*” To receive forgiveness of sins, we must repent. It is written: “If we confess our sins, God is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins.” (1 Jno. 1: 9.) But the confession is useless unless we “depart from ill” and “cease to do evil.” Not only the forgiveness of sins but all the benefits resulting therefrom are conditioned on repentance. God will *abundantly* pardon, but only when the “wicked has forsaken his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and returned unto the Lord.” It is impossible to be *consecrated* to God until sin is forsaken. We must *cease to do evil* before we can *learn to do well*. Before one can do good, seek peace and pursue it earnestly, he must refrain his lips from “speaking guile,” and his tongue from “ill words.” Only the true penitent can say:

“Take my life, and let it be
Consecrated, Lord to Thee.

Take my hands, and let them move,
At the impulse of Thy love.

Take my feet, and let them be
Swift and ‘beautiful’ for Thee.

Take my voice, and let me sing
Always, only, for my King.

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Take my lips and let them be
Filled with messages from Thee.

Take my silver and my gold ;
Not a mite would I withhold.

Take my moments and my days;
Let them flow in endless praise.

Take my intellect, and use
Ev'ry pow'r as Thou shalt choose.

Take my will, and make it Thine;
It shall be no longer mine.

Take my heart, it is Thine own;
It shall be Thy royal throne.

Take my love; my Lord, I pour
At Thy feet its treasure-store.

Take myself, and I will be
Ever, only, all for Thee."

Without repentance there can be no *communion* with God. The prodigal arose and came to the father, before the word went out: "Bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat and be merry." "Behold I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear My voice and open the door, I will come in to him and sup with him, and he with Me." (Rev. 3: 20.) These hearts closed against God and Christ and the Holy Spirit must open. A change is necessary. There must be a turning of the affections from the world, and sin and self to God and His Son. Then will Christ, who came to give life and to give it more abundantly, enter in by His Spirit and commune with us. "If I regard iniquity

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in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." When God cannot hear there can be no communion. The Lord cannot hear when iniquity is in the heart. Only the pure in heart can see God. It is necessary to see God, as well as for Him to hear us, that we may commune with Him. In order that God may *hear*, and that we may *see*, iniquity must be put out of the heart. Christ must be in possession. The ears of the Lord are open to the cries of the just. The just are those who have forsaken sin, and are following God. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him." Such enter into fellowship with the Most High as did Abraham and Moses. From them the Lord does not conceal His purpose. He talks with Moses as a man speaketh with a friend; and, concerning His dealing with Sodom, the Lord was not willing to hide from Abraham the thing that He was about to do.

All *spiritual blessings* are conditioned on repentance. The crowning and all-inclusive blessing—the Holy Spirit—is especially so. In answer to the question: "What shall we do?" Peter said: "Repent and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." A *gift*, yes, but only those who repent can receive.

In an address on the Holy Spirit, Rev. R. A.

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Torrey describes the repentance necessary, as follows: "Change your mind about God; change your mind about Jesus Christ; change your mind about sin; turn your back upon the world; turn your back upon sin and self, and turn your face toward Jesus Christ, and surrender all to Him; and then confess Him in His appointed way." Not the least spiritual blessing can be received on any less condition than a complete change of life both in heart and conduct. How much less the great, the all-embracing, blessing—the Holy Spirit. The sinner's "thoughts" and "his ways" must be forsaken. He must turn, and be turned from the "power of Satan unto God." Or, as Peter puts it: "Repent, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord."

Let us next consider the *note* of repentance. What of the *sign*? Since repentance is a result of faith, yet in point of time simultaneous with it, what we have said concerning the sign of faith will apply to repentance, and what we are about to say as to the sign of repentance will apply to faith. In short the marks of repentance are the evidences of the new life, or of conversion.

This is an *important* question both to the individual and the fellow Christian. There is

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much more comfort and dignity in possessing and occupying a house when we know that our title is clear of all mortgages and judgments, and is locked up in the household vault. So also in the warfare with the hosts of darkness: it is important that each soldier of the cross know whether or not his comrades are loyal and will "stand fire." Are all soldiers at heart, or simply in uniform? The certainty that all in the ranks are loyal, stimulates to great courage.

There are *difficulties* in ascertaining the reality of faith and repentance. The temperament and training, as well as the environments of the individual must be considered. There is that frank and open disposition that, with Peter, will say at once: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." And there is that investigating spirit that must see and feel the prints of the nails and the spear before the decided answer comes: "My Lord, and my God."

Neither in the heart nor conduct could we expect the marked change in one trained in the "way," like Timothy, that is seen in the Philippian jailor who, perhaps, knew nothing of the "way" until he heard of the uproar caused by the work and arrest of his distinguished prisoner.

And by virtue of his surroundings the evidences of an individual's true conversion are

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less discernible by others, and may be also by himself. In writing to the church at Pergamos, the Lord said: "I know thy works and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is." From this we may learn that a man can be a Christian anywhere. But it is more difficult to be a Christian some places than others, and so the Lord makes allowance for our surroundings. And in judging or estimating our fellow members it is necessary to take note of their environments as well as their temperament and training.

The steps in repentance such as contrition, confession, conversion, and consecration, ought to be decided tests, but they are not always. "*Confession* with the mouth" is not invariably a sign of "faith in the heart." All true converts are confessors; but all confessors are not true converts. True converts *forsake* sin; but all converts do not turn away from sin with "grief and hatred" of it. Some confess from a wrong motive. I believe that David meant it when he said: "Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned and done evil in Thy sight." The prodigal gave evidence that he was sincere in his confession: "Father I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight." But there is no evidence of true repentance in the confession of Saul: "I have sinned; yet honor me now, I

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pray Thee, before the elders of my people and before Israel." He dreads not the sin but the consequences of his sin, and would even yet conceal it from Samuel if he could.

So some *forsake* sin with grief and hatred, but, like Ephraim, they do not "return to the Most High." They forsake sin for physical, or social, or financial, or political reasons and their "grief and hatred" are not because of the heinousness of the sin in the sight of God, but because they are compelled to leave the sin. When David came to the throne of Israel, and sent Abner to bring back Michal, his lawful wife, whom Saul in his rage had given to Phaltiel, it is said that Phaltiel "followed behind weeping," nor would he go back until he had heard the stern and authoritative voice of Abner, saying, "Go, return." He gave up with "grief and hatred," but the cause of his grief was that he must give up. And many who *enlist* in the Lord's service do so from material and secular motives. Even they themselves are deceived, and, of course, others are. Christ, you remember, told the multitude that they followed for the "loaves and fishes."

But there *are evidences*, and *reliable*, too, that a man really has repented. He is a new man. The apostle says: "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are

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passed away; behold all things are become new. And just as there is an internal and an external repentance, so there are internal and external evidences.

There is the testimony of the Spirit within. "Hereby we know that He abideth in us, by the Spirit which He hath given us." (1 Jno. 3: 24.) "Hereby know we that we dwell in Him, and He in us, because He hath given us of His Spirit." (1 Jno. 4:13.) By the indwelling of the Spirit comes the evidence of the changed and new life. He sees that "old things are passed away and all things are become new." As we learn in the able book, on the Holy Spirit, by Dr. Buchanan, the true penitent has new views of himself, of his sins and duties and everlasting prospects; new views of life, its brevity and vanity; new views of the world, its deceitfulness; new views of the truth and of God; new views of sin and of salvation. The Spirit brings to his view new "affections" and new "joys, desires, and aims." A "new conflict" is experienced. Formerly it was between the conscience and sin. He was willing to sin but the conscience rebelled. Now when he sins it is unwillingly. The will is now on God's side. Formerly it was on the side of the devil.

The *life* is to be taken as evidence of the "new man." "In this the children of God are

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manifest and the children of the devil; whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother." (1 Jno. 3:10.) "Let no man deceive you, he that doeth righteousness is righteous, he that committeth sin is of the devil." This expression is understood to mean not the single act of sin so much as the habitual sinning or doing of unrighteousness. Just as a railway runs east or west, but frequently turns to the north or south, yet its course is east, and in the east it terminates, so the sinner may at times do that which seems right, but the course of his life is sinful; or, the righteous man, by force of habit or of his environments, at times may do that which is evil, but the whole bearing of his life is righteous. Or, to use the comparison made by Dr. Guthrie, the righteous man and the sinner are as the sheep and the swine. Both walk into the mire; the swine, in surroundings agreeable to his nature, lies down and wallows in contentment; but the sheep, in environments so uncongenial to his nature, bleats and struggles till he gets out.

Nevertheless the word is explicit as to the test of the Christian life. "Ye are My friends if ye do whatsoever I command you." (Jno. 15:14.) "And hereby we do know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments." (1 Jno.

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2: 3.) “For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not grievous.” (1 Jno. 5: 3.) The commandments are to be *kept* and that *cheerfully* if we know that we love Him. Not “keep” them nice and clean, in a flexible-backed book, clasped with a rubber band, and laid away in the book-case; not “keep” them in a huge volume on the center table as a piece of ornamental furniture; not “keep” them on a wall-roll in the bedroom where you seldom go by day, and rarely have a light with you at night. Many nominal Christians “keep” the commandments in these ways, as a sign of their faith, and they keep them *cheerfully*, too; but the meaning is to keep them in the mind and heart. The psalmist says: “Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against Thee.” And they were in his mind as well, and were not grievous. For again he says: “Oh how I love Thy law! It is my meditation all the day.” This has ever been the mark of the children of God. He said, by the prophet: “I will put My Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes, and ye shall keep My judgments and do them.” (Ezek. 36: 27.)

And again: “Every one that loveth Him that begat, loveth Him also that is begotten of Him.” (1 Jno. 5:1.) “By this shall

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all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another." (Jno. 13: 35.) It is the duty, and is considered by the scripture and the world a sign of a true convert to have love to other Christians. Not that all Christians have dispositions and temperaments congenial to every other but that every true convert will respect every other Christian because he is of the household of faith.

On the other hand it is the duty of every Christian to cultivate those graces that make him agreeable to his fellow-believers. I am as much responsible for your love to me as you are. When the Lord says: "Let brotherly love continue," He certainly means that we do nothing to hinder others from loving us, just as much as to love others. But the test of discipleship is to rise above human "likes and dislikes," and overlook the faults of others, trusting that they will overlook ours, and love them, if for no other reason, because they are Christians. "Behold how these Christians love one another." While we do not agree with the method of showing it, for the present, at least, yet we cannot do better than to refer to the example of the early Christians for a sign of their faith and discipleship when they "had all things common."

But if you are still in doubt as to your own faith and repentance, hear the evidence of the

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word: "If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater; for this is the witness of God, which He hath testified of His Son. He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself; he that believeth not God hath made Him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of His Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in the Son. He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. *These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life.*" (1 Jno. 5: 9-13.)

VIII.

POWER AND HUMILITY.

"Be clothed with humility; for God resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time."—1 PET. v: 5, 6.

"I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble."—ISA. lvii. 15.

"For we also are weak in Him, but we shall live with Him by the power of God."—2 COR. xiii. 4.

It is true that faith is the medium of power, but humility is the fitness for power. As we have said: As faith is the *gateway* to the realm of spiritual power, and repentance the *act of entering*, so humility is the *garb*. Without faith the Holy Spirit will not come, and without humility He will not dwell within our hearts. In His majesty God does dwell in the high and holy place, but in His condescension He dwells on earth with man by His Holy Spirit. Here it is expressly stated that God dwells in the *highest*, and also with him that hath a *contrite* and *humble* spirit.

Note the kind of a man with whom God dwells. Not with the great, not with the mighty, not with the rich, not with the high and lofty

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one, as the world estimates; but with the *humble*. The humble man is the one who is in Christ and shall "live with Him by the power of God." This is the man that God will revive. By the power of His Spirit, God dwells in, and works through, the man who is weak in himself and in the eyes of the world, but strong in Christ. "When I am weak, then am I strong."

"Humility," says Webster, "is not diffidence—a distrust of our power mingled with fear of censure for our failure. It is more than modesty. Not simply an absence of over-confidence, an unwillingness to put ourselves forward. It consists," he says, "in rating our claims low, in being willing to waive our rights and take a lower place than might be our due. It does not require of us to underrate ourselves. The humility of the Savior was complete and yet He had a true sense of His greatness." In short, humility is the absence of pride, where the knowledge of power is present. It is the yielding to others when it would be just as becoming for others to yield to us. It is choosing a lower seat, when entitled to go up higher. Humility is not self-righteous. No more could she be scornful, than a dove could be vicious. She cannot be selfish any more than the sun could withhold his rays at noonday. Humility gives God the credit for being what she is. She has char-

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ity for others less favored, but no malice toward her superiors.

“Humility is that low, sweet root,
From which all heavenly virtues shoot.”

Humility is a virtue. It has been compared to a tree which, when its “roots set deepest in the earth, rises higher, spreads fairer, stands surer, and lasts longer, and every step of its descent is like a rib of iron.” It is a passport to its possessor. A multitude of defects are covered under the robe of humility. Men are lenient to the humble man or child, ever lending a helping hand. We readily excuse the failings of the humble, but with the proud we are exacting as a Shylock. The world holds the self-confident, boastful man to his own estimate of himself.

“Humility is the softening shadow before the Statue of
Excellence
And lieth lowly on the ground, beloved and lovely as the
violet;
Humility is the fair-haired maid, that called Worth her
brother.
The gentle silent nurse, that fostereth infant virtues;
Humility bringeth no excuse; she is welcome to God and
man;
Her countenance is needful unto all who would prosper in
either world;
And the mild light of her sweet face is mirrored in the
eyes of her companions
And straightway stand they accepted, children of peni-
tence and love.”

It is no fancy that God resisteth the proud.
“Pride goeth before destruction, and an

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haughty spirit before a fall." How true this in the case of the proud Pharaoh, the haughty Sennacherib, and the boastful king of Babylon. The story is told of one Simon Tourney, who, after he had excelled all his companions at Oxford in learning, and had become so eminent in Paris as to be made the chief doctor, grew so proud that while he considered Aristotle as superior to Moses and Christ, he regarded him as only equal to himself. He became such an idiot at length as not to know one letter from another, or to understand anything he had ever done.

"The tower that rears its head so high,
And bids defiance to the sky
Invites the hostile winds."

Pride is not confined to the acknowledged wicked. The haughty spirit that goes before a fall is not always a child of worldly and material things. Many can readily see the folly of pride concerning social, or financial, or political, or physical achievements. At once we detect and condemn pride which is born of beauty, or strength, or wealth, or intellect; but there is a pride of heart that is even more dangerous to the Christian, and less easily detected—a pride of religion. There is such a thing as being proud of our humility. In such cases the pride

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is more in evidence than the humility. Humility is like silence. When you begin to make ado over it, it is gone. But many become elated over their apparent success in religion. They boast of their piety, and their orthodoxy. Bunyan's pilgrim became so exalted over his spiritual privileges on the Delectable mountain that he found it difficult to come down into the valley of Humiliation. The words of Paul are in point here: "I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think." "Not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth."

In Christianity, humility is of first importance. Augustine was once asked: "What is the first thing in religion?" He promptly and earnestly replied, "Humility." "What is the second thing?" "Humility." "And what is the third?" the questioner asked. To which came the same answer: "Humility."

Humility not only commends itself to us as a virtue, but God enjoins it as a *duty*. His order is: "Be clothed with humility." "Humble yourselves therefore, under the mighty hand of God." The whole life and work of Christ set forth humility in ideal. Even nature teaches the grace and dignity of this virtue;

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“The bird that soars on highest wing,
Builds on the ground her lowly nest;
And she that doth most sweetly sing,
Sings in the shade when all things rest.”

“In lark and nightingale we see
What honor hath humility.”

Since therefore, we have seen something of the *nature* of humility, we scarcely need ask what relation humility bears to spiritual power. It is self-evident that if humility gives a Christian favor with God and men it is *essential*, not only in securing, but also in exercising power. The humble Christian is the one whom God can honor and use. “Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant.” Paul was a man whom God greatly honored and used. He was a man who served the Lord with all humility of mind. He felt that he was the “chief” of sinners and God honored him as chief of the apostles. He “humbled himself under the mighty hand of God” and God exalted him in due time.

Just so long as Christian people feel independent and confident because of their “physical strength in numbers,” their powers of “organization,” their “wealth,” or “education,” or “religious reputation,” the Master cannot honor them in any special way. “The people are too many for Me to give the Midianites into their

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hands, lest they vaunt themselves against Me, saying: Mine own hand hath saved me." (Jud. 7:2.) A Christian soldier and poet has written for our own special use a campaign song (Ps. 44:6-8), the sentiment of which, when woven into our hearts, fits us for the reception and use of spiritual power:

"No trust will I place in my bow to defend,
Nor yet on my sword for safety depend.
In God who has saved us and put them to shame
We boast all the day, ever praising His name."

To God belongs the praise. When the people of Lystra with the priests of Jupiter assay to offer sacrifice to Paul and Barnabas, at once comes the cry: "Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that you should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven and earth and the sea and all things that are therein." Here God is honored by the humility of His servants. In turn, God gives them grace and power to do greater works and suffer greater things. How different the conduct and treatment of Herod! He was stricken immediately by the angel of the Lord because he gave not God the glory when the people shouted, saying: "It is the voice of a god and not of a man." Verily God resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the humble. "Be-

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fore honor is humility." "By humility and the fear of the Lord, are riches and honor and life." If these are by humility can we expect the "more abundant life" without humility? Surely not.

It is impossible for God to use and honor a haughty servant. This is one of the things that God cannot do. He *can* humble the servant and then use him. And where God has use for us He will humble us if we do not heed the word and "Humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God." "Though the Lord be high, yet hath He respect unto the lowly; but the proud He knoweth afar off." (Ps. 139:6.) The proud *are known* by the Lord but only at a *distance*. They never get near to God and, of course, are not in touch with the source of power.

Not only to please God is humility *necessary* but also to fit us for the work to be done. Our fellow men are to be met. Even they, too, resist the proud. Nothing interferes so much with success in business or acceptableness in society as the absence of humility, and certainly nothing is more unbecoming in a Christian. Humility specially fits for approaching fellow men in the interest of their souls.

We are not surprised that Barnabas was selected to go to Antioch to look after the inter-

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ests of the church there. He was humble. Although God had greatly honored him, he felt that he was a man of "like passions" with others. Indeed, it is said of him that, "He was a good *man*"—not an angel, not a "gentleman"; but a *man*, with a man's heart, and a man's sympathy. He felt that others had rights as well as himself. He was not so proud of personal opinions and Jewish customs as to debar the Greeks from the gospel. He could see that human souls were of more value than Jewish customs. That Barnabas "was a *good man*," appears in the kindness he showed Paul and Mark. Such goodness is born of humility—of a proper estimate of one's own weakness and dependence. Again, the man who is "full of faith," as was Barnabas, is humble enough to be full of the Holy Ghost. Faith and repentance and humility are fundamental conditions of spiritual power. Humility is a fruit of faith but a fruit that is *necessary* before the reception of the promised power. It might be said of humility, as of works: Show me thy faith without thy humility, and I will show you my faith by my humility.

In further answering the question why humility is *necessary* to the possession of this power, it may be noted that without it the necessary conditions before mentioned cannot be

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met. The proud cannot *pray* aright for the promised power. *Obedience* to the will of God is not characteristic of the haughty spirit, nor will he who is self-confident "*wait*" on God's time to grant the power. But Peterlike he goes in his own power. He feels no special need. Neither can such *receive* the promised power. They are not prepared for it. Without humility it is impossible to receive spiritual power.

Having thus answered the question as to the nature and necessity of humility for the securing of spiritual power, our next inquiry is: How obtain and *nourish* it?

The apostle gives us the key: "Humble yourselves." Not that it is in our power to rid our natures of all pride, worldly ambition and selfishness, but it is in our power to submit everything to God. Let Him have full possession of our hearts. Then God exalts by giving us the victory over selfish pride and sinful ambition. Where we do not have this humbling of self *under* the mighty hand of God, sooner or later there will be humbling *by* the "mighty hand of God." To humble ourselves is to accept cheerfully the place of entire dependence on God. This involves the accepting of Jesus Christ for salvation, which alone can place us in position to receive "all things" from God. Here is the explanation of the words, "Be

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clothed with humility." "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ" includes all that being clothed with humility implies. The Lord Jesus Christ is the embodiment of humility.

To be clothed with humility is to be clad for every kind of Christian service. It is being girt with a towel to "wash one another's feet"; it is an "armor of light" in time of darkness; it is a "coat of mail" in time of temptation; and a "robe of honor,"—a royal robe for all occasions.

"Be clothed with humility." Let it cover your whole life—public and private; at home and abroad; in business and pleasure. Let it be your every-day costume. It is expensive, but it is worth more than all it costs. The price is getting down from the heights of self-esteem and bowing at the feet of Jesus; but it must be paid.

It is said that a bishop who much disliked the pride of the archbishop would often exhort him to humility in these words: "Christ had never dined with Zaccheus had he not first yielded to come down from the sycamore-tree." This is what makes the new suit expensive—it is *coming down*. Our natural hearts would gladly pay millions for this suit and what it represents. But alas! how many refuse to pay the price of self-esteem and personal importance.

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It is bowing down in ashes, the mourning with heaviness of heart because of our former pride and obstinacy, that makes the expense so great. Oh, reader, pay the price! Get down in self, that you may get up in Christ.

Another feature of this robe of humility is that only those who are in service are entitled to wear it. Just as our postal system furnishes suits for its servants, so Christ, our Master, provides the costume, *humility*, for His servants. Not as remuneration for the service, but as a sign of surrender to His rule and authority. Others who may don this vesture are imposters. They have no title to it. The wearing of it can be only temporary.

✓ The genuine abiding humility is secured by a constant sense of dependence on, and obligation to, God. This is the fruit of earnest and unceasing prayer to God. As one has said: "Be always inwardly longing, and earnestly praying this one prayer to God; that of His goodness He would make known to you, and take from your heart, every kind, and form, and degree of pride, whether it be from evil spirits, or from your own corrupt nature; and that He would awaken in you the deepest depth and truth of that humility which can make you capable of His light and Holy Spirit."

As a means to humility it is good to here

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compare ourselves with others. If any seem wise, let him go to Solomon; if any boast of strength, let him look up the record of Samson; if any are skilled in music, consider David; if any seem proficient in law and statesmanship, study Moses. Are you proud of your faith, consider whether it will stand a test like that of Abraham. If young men and women find their beauty a source of pride, remember Absalom and Esther. Or if you are puffed up over your meekness, remember the meekness of Moses. Is it money that makes you proud, think of the wealth of Solomon and Lot and Job. Is any congregation proud of its building, its choir, its fame, or its wealth, compare these with the temple, with Jerusalem, beautiful for situation, and Zion, of which glorious things are spoken.

When we compare our talents and achievements with those of others we are more ready to adopt the spirit of the great naturalist, Cuvier: One day, while discussing a question in anatomy, a student interrupted him in his conversation by saying: "Monsieur le Baron." "There is no baron here," replied Cuvier. "There are two students seeking truth and bowing down only to her." Another illustration appears in a saying of Patrick Henry expressed at a Charlotte election. In the midst of a great ovation, a Baptist minister said: "Why thus follow him, he is no

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god?" Whereupon Henry, being deeply affected by both the scene and the remark, said: "No indeed, my friend, I am but a poor worm of the dust, as fleeting and unsubstantial as the shadow of the cloud that flies over yon field and is remembered no more."

It is good also to compare ourselves with the other works of God. The psalmist puts it in plain and brief terms: "The heavens declare the glory of God." "The law of the Lord is perfect," but "Who can understand his errors?" Is it not humiliating to be placed along side of Nature and Revelation in such marked contrast? These so perfect, doing their work so well; and man so imperfect that his defects cannot be estimated. Compare our own finite minds and feeble bodies and brief lives with the wisdom and power and eternity of God, and it would seem as if the words, "Humble yourselves," were useless. Man knows some things after he has been taught. All things are naked and open to the eyes of God. Man has a little strength, but God "weigheth the mountains." Man's days are but a span, "God is from everlasting to everlasting." The Rev. Andrew Murray, in that excellent little book on humility, says: "There are three great motives that urge us to humility. It becomes me as a creature, as a sinner, as a saint. The first we

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see in the heavenly hosts, in unfallen man, in Jesus as the Son of man. The second appeals to us in our fallen state, and points out the only way through which we can return to our right place as creatures. In the third we have the mystery of grace, which teaches us that as we lose ourselves in the overwhelming greatness of redeeming love humility becomes to us the consummation of everlasting blessedness and adoration."

PART III.

Power and Prophecy

OR

Power and its Predicted Product.

IX.

THE PREDICTED PRODUCT.

"I will be as the dew unto Israel; he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon."—Hos. 14: 5.

In the first five chapters we considered, "Power and Promise" as is set forth in Acts 1:8: "Ye shall receive power." In the next three, "Power and Precept," or the three fundamental conditions to spiritual power. The aim in this closing chapter shall be to discuss briefly the foretold effects of the Spirit on the church, or, as the preceding chapters have been written in answer to the questions, Who? What? How? and Why? this one shall be to answer the interrogative, Whither? The text before us will serve as a basis for our discussion of the outcome of the promised power.

The several letters of the word power will again serve to introduce our five principle divisions. The first of which is a consideration of the

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As to its primary application: Israel had fallen

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by his iniquity. (Hos. 14:1.) The nature of the iniquity appears in the confession to be made on returning, "Asshur shall not save us; we will not ride upon horses; neither will we say any more to the work of our hands: Ye are our gods." (Hos. 14:3.) The great sin of Israel was idolatry, with its accompanying evils of falsehood and drunkenness and uncleanness. (Hos. 7:5.) Turning away from God they had looked to Assyria and Egypt for help, until it was said: "Strangers have devoured his strength, and he knoweth it not; yea, gray hairs are here and there upon him." Wickedness was so great in Samaria among the rulers, and in Ephraim (Hos. 7:1), among the people that the Lord saw evidence of decay as marked as grey hairs on the natural head, and as unmistakable signs of decline. But still in God there is mercy. He stands, like the father of the prodigal, with outstretched hands to receive graciously His penitent Israel. The picture of judgment, shown by the thorns, thistles and nettles threatened against rebellious Israel, finds its counterpart in the offer of mercy, set forth by the vine, the corn and wine. The familiar words of our text embody a promise of God's favor to Israel. As the natural dew in the eastern country is the source of life to the lily and the trees of Lebanon, so is the favor of God

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to returning Israel. And there is more in the text—its prophetic significance.

Israel means to-day the Christian church. The goodness of God promised to Israel in the words, "I will be as the dew," finds its New Testament fulfilment in the words of our Lord: "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." The same truth is declared by another prophet: "I will pour My Spirit upon thy seed, and My blessing upon thine offspring, and they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water courses." (Isa. 44: 3, 4.) In the prophecy of Joel (2: 28) the figurative and poetic form gives place to the direct statement: "I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh," which prophecy Peter assures us (Acts 2: 16) was fulfilled in the realization, by the early church, of the promise: "Ye shall receive power." How often the Scriptures represent the gracious influence and work of God's Spirit by "dew." The prophet, in predicting the resurrection of the dead, says: "Awake and sing ye that dwell in the dust, for thy dew is as the dew of herbs." Moses declared: "My doctrine shall drop as the rain, My speech shall distil as the dew." So frequently is this figurative and spiritual use of the word employed we are persuaded that as the rain and dew descend from heaven and water the earth, giv-

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ing life, growth, and beauty to the lily, and vesting the mighty trees of the forests with new vigor and strength and durability, so the Spirit of God begets life and growth, beauty and strength in His church. This leads us to consider the

OPERATIONS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

First, as to *means*. With the Christian church, as with Israel of old, it is true that nearness to God is absolutely necessary to the enjoyment of His favor. She must turn to the Lord and say unto Him: "Take away all iniquity and receive us graciously." She must not depend on physical strength in numbers, nor on organization, nor wealth, nor education, nor on religious reputation. She must say: "Asshur shall not save us, we will not ride upon horses." In this particular the church of to-day surely needs to return to the Lord. "Ephraim had hired lovers," and "strangers had devoured his strength." He must return unto the Lord and cease to pay tribute to foreign powers. So with the visible church to-day. Strangers are devouring her strength. Organizations and clubs, under the guise of charity and sociability, receive their monthly and annual tribute from the church, and to meet the deficit to the Lord, her rightful sovereign, she turns to the world to

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hire lovers with festival and entertainment. So long as the tobacco and chewing gum and kid glove and wine-supper and fine turn-out accounts of the church exceed her missionary contributions by thousands, it is evident that strangers are devouring her strength. In financial matters, the church must honor God, as well as in spiritual matters. "Honor the Lord with thy substance." "Acknowledge Him in all thy ways." There must be a complete return to God, by the church as a body, and by the individuals constituting such a body, if His favor is to be enjoyed.

That He may especially bless His church or His child, God often chastises them with *persecution* and *affliction*. Obedience is necessary to secure the fulness of the Spirit. By means of affliction comes obedience. The psalmist testifies: "It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn Thy statutes." "Before I was afflicted I went astray; but now have I kept Thy word."

By this means the Spirit of God comes to the church and to the individual. Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. Otherwise we are unable to account for the afflictions and persecutions to which the people of God are subjected. As a refiner of silver, He sits purifying our souls,

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that we may offer unto Him an offering in righteousness. In this way the church is made pure within, and divested of all outward defects. The indifferent, lukewarm, and merely nominal Christians are turned away. They go out from her because they are not of her. The church, then, as the wheat separated from the chaff, or like Job of old, "tried," comes forth as gold. It has ever been the history of the church that through persecution the Holy Spirit has operated in beautifying and strengthening her. Through persecution in Jerusalem the Spirit spread the church into Samaria and Judea.

But a still greater means through which the Spirit of God operates, is the *word*. Not the enticing words of man's wisdom, but His own word, has God honored as the instrument of His Spirit. It goeth forth as a messenger of mercy, giving life and beauty, energy and power, to the Israel of God. "For as the rain cometh down and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater; so shall My word be that goeth forth out of My mouth. It shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please and shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." It is true that "The Spirit of God rides most

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triumphantly in His own chariot." Of all the means by which the Spirit operates on the church, none has He honored more than His word. *It is His sword.*

Christ prays: "Sanctify them through Thy truth." The word is the instrument of the Spirit in cleansing and beautifying the church. The Holy Spirit makes the word quick and powerful and sharper than a two-edged sword. The word "burns in the heart" only when wielded by Him. "He maketh the reading, but especially the preaching of the word, an effectual means of convincing and converting sinners, and of building them up in holiness and comfort through faith unto salvation.

Through the word our spiritual natures are fed. By the Holy Spirit it becomes the "meat and drink" of the church. To withhold the word is to rob the Spirit of His chosen means, and the church of her life-giving power. When, at the prayer of Elijah, the doors of heaven were closed for the space of three and one-half years, Palestine, that land of milk and honey, was scourged with drought and famine. But the man of God prayed again, and the earth, baptized by rain from heaven, revived and brought forth fruit. How much more serious the spiritual drought and famine in the church when the word is withheld! Feed her with

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moral essays; teach her principles of science, instruct her children in the rules of etiquette, overflow her walls with polite literature, and yet she becomes as the sandy Sahara. But instruct her children in the word that "liveth and abideth forever," teach her members that the law was given by Moses, and that grace and truth came by Jesus Christ, and through the vitalizing energy of the word, under the quickening power of the Spirit, the church revives and grows beautiful as the lily, and strikes forth her roots as Lebanon.

Second, as to *manner*. The record is that, "Suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a mighty rushing wind." (Acts 2:2.) There came a sound and that suddenly, that all in the house might know that the "promise of the Father" had been fulfilled. Having come suddenly and audibly, the Holy Spirit abides to do His work gradually and silently. As the forces of nature operate in nourishing and sustaining the natural life, so does the Spirit of God work in His kingdom.

Gradually as the moisture and nutriment enter the roots and trunk and limbs and go even to the tip of the topmost leaf, so He permeates the whole church. In like manner the individual receives this power of the Spirit. It has been observed that a cistern can be filled

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with water as surely by letting in little drops as by pouring in great hogsheads. In the words of Dr. Chapman: "He will, doubtless, begin in some little way to manifest His presence, just as it were, drop by drop. To-day a new pathos in the voice, to-morrow a new touch of the hand, and so on, day by day, till His presence in all its fulness will be a blessed reality."

The Spirit is gradual and silent in His operations. ✓

Next, what of His

WORK, OR RESULTS?

Our text declares the work, or effects on the church. "He shall grow as the lily and cast forth his roots as Lebanon." The *growth* of the lily is *rapid* and *beautiful*. When the promised power is received by the Christian church the fulfilment of this prediction begins at once. The record of Pentecost is that there were "added unto them during that day about three thousand souls." (Acts 2:41.) And, to follow up the early history, this rapidity of growth is marked in almost every chapter of the Acts. In chapter 4: 4 it is said, "The number of men came to be about five thousand; 5:14, "Added to the Lord multitudes of both men and women"; 6: 7, "The number of the disciples

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multiplied in Jerusalem exceedingly, and a great number of the priests were obedient to the faith," Chapter 9:35 says: "And all that dwelt at Lydda and in Saron saw Him, and they turned to the Lord." When the raising of Dorcas by Peter became known throughout all Joppa, "many believed on the Lord." (9:42.)

When the dispersed came to Antioch and spake unto the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus, "A great number believed and turned unto the Lord." (11:21.) The first verse of the fourteenth chapter tells us that, "A great multitude both of Jews and Greeks believed." In 16:5 we learn that "The churches increased in number daily." The rapidity of the growth appears when we compare the 120 of the upper room with the 500,000 her estimated membership at the close of the first century.

There is *beauty* in the lily as well as rapid growth, and the beauty of the church is a product of the Spirit as truly as is the rapidity of growth. The beauty of the church increases with the "refreshing" of the Spirit of God. Not that from age to age the church structures shall become more magnificent, nor that her courts shall be thronged with more splendid audiences, clothed in gorgeous apparel; but that collectively and individually she shall become more pleasing in the sight of God. She shall

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be what God designed her to be, as a bride adorned for her husband: adorned with that beauty peculiar to her nature.

All nature is marked with beauty, but to every phase of nature there is a peculiar beauty. The beauty of one landscape consists in its broad prairies rising into the distant mountains and blending into the sky. Another is beautiful because of its luxuriant meadows blending into the oval shaped hills and watered by the crystal brooks. A beauty peculiar to the ocean is the tossing of her majestic waves into the glorious light of the noonday sun. The blue canopy of heaven with her myriad stars by night and crowned with the tabernacle of the sun by day presents another beauty. One has said: "There is beauty in the human face divine. And here we find one beauty in the fair face of woman and beauty of a rougher cast in the countenance of man." But different from and, superior to all these varied beauties, is the beauty of holiness. Not all the beauty of nature and art combined can equal that of the redeemed—the body of Christ. We may consider this beauty in its

EXHIBITION.

The beauty of the church is seen in her outward *activity* and *consistency*. Herein is the

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image of Christ reflected. Can her outward beauty find a better expression than in these? His life was active and consistent. The question of His youth: "Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business?" breaths the spirit of His whole life. To reflect His image, the church must be diligent in doing His work. Christian activity is Christlike. It is feeding and clothing the poor, visiting the sick, teaching the ignorant, and bringing or sending the gospel to those in darkness.

The fairest pages in the history of Christendom are those recording the missionary efforts of the church. From the sending out of the "twelve" and the "other seventy" to the going forth of Carey, Judson, Mills and Paton the strength and beauty of the church have been exhibited in her activity. The effort to advance the kingdom of Christ adorns His body, the church.

As is activity, so is *consistency* in action and life an element of the beauty of the church. The great abomination of the Pharisees was their boasted profession—their adhering to the letter and ignoring the spirit of the law. When the letter of the law is the greatest depth of life and action, the moral and spiritual complexion is devoid of beauty. There must be obedience to the spirit of the law and sincerity in the

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heart corresponding to the profession, as well as a correspondence between the profession and the action. Otherwise the picture of the prophet is a true one: "They sit before Thee as Thy people and hear Thy words, but they will not do them, for with their mouth they show much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness." Consistency is a jewel indeed when gracing the brow of the church. "Pretty is that pretty does," is just as true of the church as of the child. Not the recital of the petitions, "Hallowed be Thy name," "Thy kingdom come," "Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven"; but the reverencing of the name, the doing of the will, and the seeking of the interests of the kingdom, constitute the outward beauty which is the product of the Spirit. As was said of Jerusalem when aroused to activity and consistency, "Thou wast exceedingly beautiful, thy renown went forth among the heathen for thy beauty," so it may be affirmed of the church of Christ in this dispensation of the Spirit.

This external beauty of activity and consistency has a corresponding internal beauty of *purity* and *peace*. A beauty no less the product of the Spirit. It is this inward beauty of peace and purity that makes the church pleasing in the sight of God. The "outward appearance" does not satisfy Him. He sees not as man seeth.

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That He looketh upon the heart, is as true of the church as of the individual. The worship of the church should be such as God has appointed in His word—a worship directed to the Godhead, through the Son, by the Holy Spirit; a worship divested of all superstitious, idolatrous and unwarranted motives and methods.

That the church may be pure within, her members must be pure in life. Purity is the prime element of the kingdom. The Lord Himself is pure. He charges His angels with folly. The church is expected to be holy, just as He is holy. Christ's work is to redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people; to present the church as a chaste virgin. This work is the product of His Spirit, because God has from the beginning chosen her unto salvation through sanctification of the Spirit. This sanctification through the Spirit removes all guile, and malice, and corruption.

The psalmist (Ps. 15: 1-5) presents a remarkable picture of the church-member chosen unto salvation through sanctification of the Spirit—the member who is pure in life:

Oh, Jehovah, who shall dwell
In the temple of Thy grace,
Who *shall* on Thy holy hill
Have a fixed abiding place.

He who walks in righteousness
All his actions just and clear;

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He whose words the truth express
Spoken from a heart sincere;

He who ne'er with slandering tongue
Utters malice and deceit.

Who will ne'er his neighbor wrong
Nor a slanderous tale repeat;

Who the impious will spurn,
Honor those that fear the Lord;
Though he to his loss have sworn
Will not break his plighted word;

Who no usury will claim,
Nor with bribes pollute his hand,
He who thus his life shall frame
Shall unmoved forever stand.

How beautiful the church when the life of every member shall conform to this pattern!

Another product of the work of the Spirit is *peace*. A peaceful church is a beautiful church. There is a remarkable difference between a peaceful and a peaceable church. The church may be peaceable and yet lack the beauty of the peaceful. In relation to the outside world the church may be very peaceable—no waging of war against the evils of intemperance and Sabbath desecration, or other forms of organized wickedness; and at the same time be void of *peace* within. The Spirit-filled church, beautiful in the sight of God, has peace within and war without. This is the Christlike church; for He came not to send peace on the earth but a sword. Yet among those who fight under His banner, Christ would have peace, united effort

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and brotherly love. Such is the condition of the church predicted in those immortal words: (Ps. 133:1.)

“Behold how good a thing it is,
And how becoming well,
Together such as brethren are
In unity to dwell.”

Not necessarily unity of organization, but unity of spirit.

The Christian church, to-day, by the power and through the sanctification of the Spirit, is full of peace. While there are different denominations there is practically one church. The dwelling together in unity means not the unifying of thought and profession but the submission to one Spirit. As in a family, all the members have different names, and vary in disposition and temperament, but are one by the bond of family love; or as the various members of the body differ in form and perform different functions yet are held together in beautiful symmetry by one influence—life; so the church by the power of the Spirit is one and full of peace.

It is said that in the Romish school the definition of beauty was “multitude in unity,” and this is doubtless the true idea of beauty in the church; the whole church ruled and moved by the one Spirit. This is not only the predicted

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but the actual product of the Spirit's work, that they may be all one in Christ, the glorious head, and that they may grow up unto Him in all things, till they all come in the unity of faith, and knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."

Thus we have seen the indwelling effect of the promised Spirit. It is growth in *beauty* and *strength*. The exhibition of these has been considered. What of their

ROOTS?

Israel is to grow as the lily—a rapid and beautiful growth. Also he is to *cast forth his roots as Lebanon*. The growth of the church under the influence of the Spirit is not for a time—as the lily—but a growth to be perpetuated. Durability and strength are at once suggested by the words, "casting forth his roots as Lebanon." Solomon's glory came short of that of the lily, but the beauty of the church under the power of the Spirit is "as the lily." *His* glory vanished, but that of the *church* shall endure. The church by her triple roots of *faith, love* and *hope*, silently, but surely and constantly, receives strength from the never failing source. As by the refreshing of the Spirit she grows in beauty, by so much does she develop

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in strength. It is by faith and love and hope that the Spirit comes to her in His reviving, refreshing power; and, in turn, by the blessing of the Spirit, her faith and love and hope are strengthened. It is *faith* in Christ that gives strength and durability to the church. Like the anchor in time of storm, says one, which, let fall, passeth through the water and billows, stayeth not *till* it reacheth the bottom and graspeth the solid earth; so faith stays the church that it is not dashed on the rocks of infidelity.

“They in the Lord that firmly trust
Shall be like Zion hill,
Which at no time can be removed,
But standeth ever still.”

Love for the Master is another root which, strengthened by the Spirit of God, adds to the durability of the church. Human love is no feeble bond. The love of home, of friends, of the mother for her child, is a bond of strength; but in that love for the Master where friends and homes and fathers and mothers are forsaken, there is unspeakable strength. This love frees from the bondage of earth, and fleshly ties. The work of the Spirit is to develop this love, and by it to unite the whole body of Christians to one another and to Christ. Herein is strength; for “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation or distress or persecution or

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famine or nakedness or peril or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Combined and interwoven with faith and love is a third element of strength, viz.—*hope*. While the centuries pass by, the words of the angels are still ringing in the ears of the church: "This same Jesus shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven." As by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead the Father hath begotten us again unto a "lively hope," so by this promise that He *shall* again come is begotten a blessed hope. It is the hope of seeing Him as He is. "And every one that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as He is pure." The Holy Spirit, taking of the things of Christ and showing them unto us, strengthens this hope, till it proves to be as an anchor of the soul, both "sure and steadfast," and which "entereth within the veil."

How binding the obligation accompanying these precepts: "Repent ye and believe the gos-

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pel." "Humble yourselves," and "Be clothed with humility." And what unspeakable joy as we see the fulfilling of that prediction: "I will be as the dew unto Israel, he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon." How great the assurance and encouragement by reason of that promise: "Ye shall receive power." "Take ye the Holy Spirit," is still the personal, practical, emphatic message of our risen, reigning, returning Lord to you and to me.

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